

SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOL. 17.]

MARCH, 1883.

[No. 3.

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THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL BANNER

IS designed to afford aid to Sunday-school Teachers and Heads of Families in the religious training of the young, and to excite throughout the country a deeper interest in Sunday-school work.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

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TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOLUME XVII.]

MARCH, 1883.

[No. 3.

"How Much Owest Thou unto my Lord."

BY FAIRELIE THORNTON.

WHAT will you *do* for Jesus,
Oh, you for whom He bled?
Will you do aught for Jesus,
Who suffered in your stead?
To-day He asks your service,
Will you not heed the call?
What will you do for Jesus?
Will you not yield Him all!

What will you *give* for Jesus,
Who gave His life for thee?
Will you not give your lifetime,
Though short that life may be?
O can you spend in pleasure
That life redeemed by blood?
To-day He asks his lawful right,
O will you grieve your God?

What will you *say* for Jesus?
Your lips are not your own,
And they must speak for Jesus
If they are His alone.
Must speak, though it may cost thee
Reproach, and shame, and loss;
Fear not, trust him, and obey,
And take up thus the cross.

What can you *bear* for Jesus.
Who bore so much for thee?
Can you bear ought for Jesus,
Or do you trials flee?
Oh would'st thou be like Jesus,
Thou must not fear to bear
The cross which He shall give you,
Which He with you will share!

What will you *yield* to Jesus?
Oh, fix to-day your choice,
And make a full surrender
Of heart, of hands, of voice!
Half-hearted, cold, and faithless,
He will not have you be;
Yield, O yield yourself, your all,
To serve most willingly.

To-day *give all* to Jesus,
All—all you have to give;
Why should you fear to trust him,
And dread His life to live?
For the service is not hard,
Which full surrender needs:
'Tis but to *trust Christ fully,*
And follow where He leads.

The Sabbath School.

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

GROUP after group are gathering, such as prest
Once to their Saviour's arms, and gently laid
Their cherub heads upon His shielding breast,
Though sterner souls the fond approach forbade;
Group after group glide on with noiseless tread,
And round Jehovah's sacred altar meet,
Where holy thoughts in infant hearts are bred,
And holy words their ruby lips repeat,
Oft with a chasten'd glance, in modulation
sweet.
Yet some there are upon whose childish brow
Wan poverty has done the work of care;
Look up, ye sad ones! 'tis your Father's house
Beneath whose consecrated dome you are;

More gorgeous robes ye see, and trappings rare,
And watch the gaudier forms that gaily rove,
And deem, perchance, mistaken as you are,
The "coat of many colours" proves His love
Whose sign is in the heart, and whose reward
above.

And ye, blest labourers in this humble sphere,
To deeds of saint-like charity inclined,
Who from your cells of meditation dear
Come forth to guide the weak, untutor'd
mind—

Yet ask no payment, save one smile refined
Of grateful love, one tear of contrite pain—
Meekly ye forfeit to your mission kind
The rest of earthly Sabbaths. Be your gain
A Sabbath without end, 'mid yon celestial
plain.

The Old Way-Train.

The old way-train does not make much of a show beside the "lightning express" that comes with a shriek and a dash, and almost takes your breath away as it goes shooting by, crashing—and sometimes smashing—down the track. The lightning express has all the latest improvements, the most recent touches of the painter's brush, and the most distinguished freight. But the way-train jogs leisurely along, slow as an old stage-coach among the March ruts sometimes. It is made up of the cars whose upholstery is worn and faded, and as for improvements, who expects them? But that old way-train, stopping at so many stations to take breath, picks up many passengers. We have seen an "express" that went lightly loaded, but the old way-train often goes crowded.

We thank God for the express-train men in the Church. They do conspicuous service, though their "latest improvements" are not always wise. But the old way-train men, slower in action, old-fashioned in talk and dress, do take many passengers to heaven. They call at so many humble little stations that you may not appreciate their work, but it tells, and when the old way-train rolls and thunders into the station, be assured there will be passengers on board.—*S. S. Journal*.

Library Books.

We are growing tired of this incessant tirade against Sunday-school literature. Our weariness arises from no personal sensitiveness, however. We never wrote a book for any Sunday-school library; have none on the stocks; never expect to burden the press or the public with any. We believe, moreover, that some of the literature published by outside and non-religious houses for the Sunday-school market is weak, dissipating, and demoralizing. Its authors and publishers think that "any thing is good enough for children, only so it is simple." It is pernicious,

because it is written with reference to two markets, the secular holiday, fiction-loving class of readers, and—the Sunday-school. There is no religion in it; a smack, perchance, of weak morality; a *denouement* of some complicated plot, but with a fearful exposure to demoralization before the final lesson of virtue is administered. Before the religious element is introduced, the reader is intoxicated with worldly scenes, worldly maxims, worldly pleasures, and worldly schemes. There is too much of this literature. We are sorry enough for it, and we warn all Sunday-school superintendents and parents against it. Let their eyes be open.

But why join in a general denunciation of all fictitious literature, and why ridicule the "Sunday-school library" as a whole? Put a ban on bad books. Point them out. Warn people against them. Let the Sunday-school library be made up of the good, strong, earnest, pure literature which such houses as the Methodist Book Concern, the American Sunday-school Union, Carter Brothers, the Presbyterian Board of Publication, and other houses, supply.

It is absurd to denounce all preaching because there are extravagant and sensational men in the pulpit; to repudiate all Sunday-school music because, for example, there is poor poetry set to poor music. Let us have sense. Let us discriminate.

It is the fault of the Standing Committee on the Library if a weak book finds place on the shelf. It is the fault of the pastor if the Standing Committee be not rightly constituted, or lack vigilance.—*S. S. Journal*.

The following plan for conducting a teacher's meeting, is a good one. Of it the *Sunday School Journal* says:

After the opening prayer, and the reading of the lesson by the teachers, all possible questions concerning the lesson which may occur to the teachers are suggested, and taken down in writing by the leader of the meeting. The verses are taken up, one after the other, and every question elicited which can be thought of—questions which the teachers themselves desire to ask; questions which scholars might ask for the solution of difficulties, for geographical and historical facts involved, for doctrinal inferences, etc.

After all questions have been asked, they are then taken up, one by one, and answered by the teachers, and the answers written down.

In this way the interest of all the teachers is elicited; their difficulties, or the possible difficulties of their classes, stated; and, however unable the leader of such meeting may be to give new ideas, he thereby puts into active operation the knowledge and thinking power of his whole board of teachers.

THE Chinese Sunday-school in Chicago has increased from twenty-nine pupils to sixty-five during the present year. One member has returned to China, to engage in missionary work there.

Style of Teaching.

IN Scriptural instruction, as well as in every other branch of learning, much of the success of the teacher depends upon his style. However interesting the subject, and however correct the information imparted, if the style be formal and stiff, but little impression of a lasting character will be made; while, on the other hand, if the style be graphic and life-like, the subject will be invested with interest, attention will be excited, and a permanent impression produced.

The oft-told anecdote of the preacher and the actor will illustrate this point. "How is it," said the preacher, "that we who represent truth produce so much smaller results than you who represent fiction?" "Because," replied the actor, "you represent truth as if it were fiction, while we represent fiction as if it were truth."

Sunday-school teachers should endeavour to acquire and adopt such a graphic style in their description of persons, places, or incidents, as shall convey a bold, attractive, and life-like impression of the subject under consideration.

They should present to their scholars mental pictures, in which the facts are brought out with such life and power as to give striking and correct ideas of the scenes depicted—pictures which represent facts, not in their isolated character, but in combination with the attendant circumstances—pictures which in some cases will owe their effectiveness mainly to the extent of the teacher's knowledge, and in others to the power of his imagination, but which in either case will be rendered so beautiful and life-like, that the facts will seem to stand out before the minds of the scholars in bold relief. They will seem to see the very spot, behold the man, hear his words, become acquainted with his doings, and thus receive an impression at once agreeable, vivid, and permanent.—*Hartley's "Pictorial Teaching."*

How to Teach.

SOME teachers and leaders of normal classes and teachers' meetings are so liberal with what they know about the subject or lesson before them, that they scarcely allow any one in the class to contribute anything to the occasion. They begin at the beginning, and close only with the close of the meeting, their process of giving forth their own knowledge. We do not say this in a censorious spirit, but simply to call attention to a style of teaching which we do not consider the best.

The better way is, for each one in the class to have an opportunity to contribute to this fund of knowledge before the teacher or leader tells all he or she may know about it.

"PASS THE HAT."

Just as the steward passes the hat or basket to each one in the congregation, so let the teacher, by personal questions, give each member of the class an opportunity to say something about the lesson, or any of the circumstances connected with it.

For instance: a description of the Sea of Galilee is desired; here each one can state some

fact in reference to shape, size, depth, surroundings, etc.; and thus a pretty complete description is given on the contribution plan. The same may be done in reference to the teachings of the lesson text, and any point connected with it.

After all these collections are made, the leader can add to the stock by illustrations, or a short, pointed lecture, that will fix each mind upon the most salient points.

Thus the teacher's meeting and the normal class can be made so interesting, that it will not be difficult to sustain them.—*Evangelical S. S. Teacher.*

Teacher's Personal Character.

SAID Rowland Hill: "That man is a bad preacher in the pulpit who is not a good one out of it. . . . We should preach by what we are, as well as by what we say." This is an apt statement of a very important truth. A high standard of religious and moral character is properly demanded of those who stand before the people as teachers of God's truth. Any one who cannot meet this requirement ought to step down and out of the ministry.

But does not this apply with as much force to the Sunday-school teacher, as it does to the preacher of the gospel? If not, why so? Their work is essentially the same. Both are teachers of God's truth. One is as really a preacher of the gospel as the other. Neither can instruct others into the ways of truth successfully, without walking therein himself.

The importance of the teacher's personal character has not been lost sight of altogether by Sunday-school workers; but the standard of it has not been high enough, nor has the insistence upon it been as vigorous as it ought to be. Many persons are allowed to occupy the position of teacher in the Sunday-school whose religious character and life are not what they ought to be. Many are in this position who are not even Christians. This is wrong, even if it is the best that can be done in some cases. The teacher teaches by his personal influence, by the general flavour of his character. Unless these are right, he is wrong. The best of teaching in the class—as teaching is often judged—will be more than neutralized by a bad influence and example away from it.—*Baptist Teacher.*

Only One.

ONE thinker can think out a thought that gives light to a multitude. One voice can fill a room crowded with people with glorious words full of wisdom and power. One determined will can provide a plan and a place, a purpose and a desire, out of which good influence may grow.

One person can keep up a Sunday-school all winter. He can open the school-house, build a fire, welcome each pupil, urge them to come again and bring others with them. One soul can thus serve and inspire other souls.

Are you the one who ought and does not?—*S. S. Journal.*

OUR PUBLICATIONS.

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The Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHEROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, MARCH, 1883.

The Work of the Sunday-School Board.

ABOUT once a month the Executive of the Board are called together by the Secretary, who reads the applications and letters, and then the Committee make as liberal grants as its finances will allow, and the necessities of the case seem to require. Many of the letters are very interesting. We take the liberty of quoting from a couple of them from the remote East. One brother writes:—

"Many thanks for the papers so kindly sent us during the past year. We all like them very much. They certainly are *the best* that can be had for Sabbath-school work. Several children of other denominations are attending our School for the purpose of obtaining our nice papers.

I send you a small order, the best we can do at present, as times are hard here, our ship-building having failed, and many of the husbands and fathers being absent in the States, trying to earn a pittance for their families."

Another says:—

"In sending in this application, I thought it best to send a few words relating to the condition of the School on this Circuit. We have been trying to make the School interesting, but have been many times so sensible of failure in this respect as to be almost discouraged. Want of books, etc., has been a great cause of this. After receiving the circular from the Executive Committee of the S. S. Board, I stated at the School that we might get some papers if we would try to help ourselves, and appointed the next Sabbath to receive their gifts toward this object. Although the amount is small, it is large for those who gave it, as the people here are quite poor. We have, as you see by answers on the other side, thirty-six scholars, and hope soon to have more. We should like to have got some books, but there is no way of getting them here now, as there is but little communication with other places, the mail being, part of the winter, carried on foot."

Many similar applications are received. The new paper, HOME AND SCHOOL, is very highly commended—very many single subscriptions are received for it, and in many places it is the only Methodist or religious paper the people can afford to take. The connexional intelligence, and portraits and life sketches of connexional leaders are much appreciated, and their continuation is requested. We shall endeavour to give additional portraits.

The Dominion Hymnal.

THE new Sunday-school Hymnal is now ready. It contains 302 hymns. We consider it the best book, for its designed purpose, with which we are acquainted. The Rev. Dr. Sanderson has bestowed a great deal of labour on the book, and to him is due its admirable arrangement and the exceedingly appropriate mottoes or texts for each hymn. We quote the following remarks of the preface, which is also from his graceful pen:—

"A great deal of time has been spent in the preparation of this small volume of Sacred Song for Sunday-schools throughout the Dominion. It is the joint product of earnest and experienced workers, both clerical and lay, in the Sunday-school department of Christian effort. Not less than ten thousand hymns have been examined by the committee to which this work was committed; and it would have been to them an easier and much more satisfactory task to prepare a much larger volume, could they have felt justified in so doing.

"To keep within reasonable limits; to introduce a sufficient number of new hymns, and yet retain a fair proportion of old ones, dear to many hearts; to provide for the more thoughtful,

and not utterly exclude all hymns of a lighter type; to meet the wants and tastes of teachers, adult scholars, and children of different grades, down to that of the infant class; to provide for the numerous anniversaries recognized by the Churches; to introduce nothing of doubtful theology or tendency, and to make the Hymnal suitable for social services without damage to Sabbath-school interests, were among the many considerations steadily kept in view by the committee.

"A Tune Book, with a tune adapted to every hymn in the Hymnal, has also been prepared by another committee. The music is issued simultaneously with the publication of the hymns. In the examination of the music it will be very apparent that the right hand of one, who by previous musical compilations placed the Church under no small obligation, has not forgotten its cunning. Both Hymnal and Tune Book are so paged as to make it easy to find the hymn in the one and the music in the other, without reference to Index. May this volume, prepared and published by authority of the General Conference of the Methodist Church, be rendered a great blessing to thousands throughout the Dominion of Canada.

WE beg to acknowledge, with many thanks, the receipt of Sunday-school libraries for donations to poor Schools, from the Walkerton Sunday-school, per E. H. Sheffield, Sec'y, and from the Burford Sunday-school, per Rev. W. Hayhurst.

The Superintendent's Work.

1. BEFORE the lesson: To be present ten minutes before the time of opening. To greet the teachers and scholars before school. To provide substitutes for absent teachers. To have the parts of the programme filled out, appropriate hymns selected, etc. To make the opening exercises short, and vary them occasionally. To call for the text of the morning sermon, and where it is found.

2. During the lesson: Avoid walking about and interfering with the teachers. Have an eye to order. See how the work is being done. Keep everybody away from the classes. Watch for good appointments for new teachers. Gently tap the bell five minutes before the close of the lesson. Note any indications of special spiritual interest in any class.

3. After the lesson: As soon as attention is secured, be ready to proceed. Review the lesson briefly, but pointedly, using questions, previously prepared, calculated to elicit ready answers. Seek to impress the truth taught by the teacher, rather than to dissipate it by striking or sensational efforts, which display the superintendent's abilities as a blackboardist or otherwise. As far as possible, let the closing hymn be petitional in its character, and in harmony

with the teachings of the lessons. The superintendent, having carefully observed during the teaching of the lesson any special interest in any case, or special lack of it, should endeavour to speak sympathizingly and helpfully with the teacher before leaving the room. The superintendent ought to observe and speak appreciatively to those who have made special effort to be present. See that the spirit of reverence is maintained by every one up to the moment of leaving the room.—R. W. Woodward.

Great Influence of Little Things.

THE man who wrote the four simple lines beginning with "Now I lay me down to sleep," seemed to do a very small thing. He wrote four lines for his little child. His name has not come down to us, but he has done more for the good of his race than if he had commanded the victorious army at Waterloo. The little fires which the good man kindles here and there on the shores of time, never go out; but ever and anon they flame up and throw a light upon the pilgrim's path. There is hardly anything so fearful, to my mind, as the mind reaching down into the coming ages, and writing itself upon the minds of unborn generations. We know not whose hand held the pen that wrote the Arabian Nights; but what a book! How few are the children who have not sat spell-bound at the feet of that enchanter!

Book Notices.

The Early Days of Christianity. By F. W. FARRAR, D.D., F. R. S., Canon of Westminster; author of "The Life of Christ," "The Life and Work of St. Paul," etc. 8vo., 664 pages. Price, 40 cents, paper; 75 cents, cloth. New York: Funk & Wagnalls; and Methodist Book Rooms, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax.

This great work, which is issued in one volume with all the Notes, Appendix, Index, etc. the same as the Five-Dollar Edition, throws a flood of light on the Acts of the Apostles, and should be in the hands of all preachers who lecture or preach on the Sunday-school lessons, and of all Sunday-school Superintendents and teachers, and of Advance Bible Class Scholars. The marvellously low price puts it within the reach of all.

"It describes the deeply interesting events of the early days of the Christian Church, and the state of politics and society in which the Church grew up. An account is given of the lives and writings of the three pillar apostles, St. Peter, St. James, and St. John, with an explanation of their Epistles and of the Apocalypse. The social and political conditions of the Roman Empire, and the relation of the Church with it, are treated with Canon Farrar's well-known learning and eloquence. The glowing and rapid style for which Canon Farrar has been so much admired carries the reader easily through the

difficulties of textual criticism, and nothing in the work is more remarkable than the happy combination of minute scholarship with the graces of a literary method, and at times the rhetorical fervour of an advocate."

The *Bodley Books*. By HORACE E. SCUDDER. 6 vols., sq. 8vo. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Toronto: Wm. Briggs. Price, \$1.50 per vol.

The charm about these books is, that while capital holiday and birthday gift-books, they are equally suitable for use all the year round. We know of no similar series in which instruction and entertainment for young people are so admirably blended. Mr. Scudder, the Editor, is a gentleman of fine literary taste, and has that skilled tact which enables him to communicate historic and useful information in a remarkably interesting manner. The volumes are independent of each other, but since the characters are the same in all of them, there is a natural connection and unity in the series. They are copiously illustrated from the ample resources of the great house whose name they bear, and are printed with all the mechanical excellence for which the Riverside Press is famed. The fine selection of some of the noblest poems of the language, with admirable illustrations, gives the books a marked educational value.

Vol. I., *The Doings of the Bodley Family in Town and Country*, is one of the best, with 77 engravings, and 250 pages. It describes life about Boston, and gives "The Piper of Hamlin," "The Heir of Lynn," "The Hunting of the Cheviot," and other classical English poems.

Vol. II., *The Bodleys Telling Stories*, describes certain historic buildings, with their associations, a visit to Cape Cod, and gives a charming French Christmas carol and Story of Bethlehem.

Vol. III., *The Bodleys on Wheels*, records a family journey through the old historic towns of Salem, Newburyport, Cape Ann, Marblehead, and other places, which have been made famous in song and story. Longfellow's poems are laid under tribute, and a beautiful story by Ruskin is given.

Vol. IV., *The Bodleys Afoot*, describes a trip down the picturesque Valley of the Connecticut, to Hartford, New Haven, and on to New York, with sketches of Yale College.

Vol. V., *Mr. Bodley Abroad*, records the experiences of that gentleman in Scotland, the Low Countries, and Switzerland, elegantly illustrated, together with the adventures of the young folk at home.

Vol. VI., is *The Bodleys in Holland*. They went to study history, geography, and customs, not in great libraries, but in the people's faces and houses and all the curious things in that old-fashioned country. Mr. Scudder has a delightful way of insinuating information into books of pastime. One doesn't seem to be studying history when reading his stories of the olden time. The heroic story of William the Silent, and the Dutch patriot martyrs, is re-told

from the glowing pages of Motley, and is beautifully illustrated by numerous engravings. The illuminated cover is really a work of fine art.

The Dominion Hymnal—A Collection of Hymns and Music for Sunday-school and Social Worship, pp. 30. Price, single copy, 60c.; per dozen, \$6.

This is a book for which our Schools have long been waiting—and it is worth waiting for. It is one of the very best Sunday-school Hymnals extant. What strikes one in opening it is the exceedingly clear and legible type of both music and words. Every page has been electrotyped in copper, and is as sharp and clear as copper-plate engraving. Of the music we are personally incapable of judging, but from the distinguished reputation of the musical Editor, the Rev. Dr. Williams, who has prepared some of the most successful music books ever published in the Dominion, we are confident that it will meet the just expectations of all lovers of good music. Now that our Schools have an authorized hymnal of unsurpassed excellence, we hope that the great variety of unauthorized and inferior ones will speedily be superseded by the Dominion Hymnal.

Adventures in Canada; or, Life in the Woods. Edited by JOHN C. GEIKIE. Pp. 408. Philadelphia: Porter & Coates. Toronto: Wm. Briggs. Price \$1.00.

It may not be generally known that the distinguished Dr. J. Cunningham Geikie, the author of one of the most learned and successful Lives of Christ ever written, of *Hours With the Bible*, and other valuable books, was for a long time resident in Canada, first in Canada West, then in Nova Scotia, and one of his brothers still lives in this city—a successful physician. In the book under notice, Dr. Geikie gives an account of his boyhood's adventures in the Canada of some thirty years ago; of his voyage across the Atlantic; his landing at Quebec; his journey to Toronto, and westward to his new home on the St. Clair river; and of his subsequent adventures in the country. He gives a graphic account of bush life—of hunting and fishing, of wolf and bear stories, Indian adventures, anecdotes of Canadian social life, a description of a visit to Niagara Falls, an account of the oil-wells, of life in Toronto, and other things that all Canadian boys will like to read.

The Apollo, a Journal of Music. Boston: L. E. Whipple, 495 Washington St. \$1 a year.

This is a new and handsome musical magazine, with copyright music, reading matter, etc. This is a cheap way to get good music.

JOHN W. LOVELL Co., have arranged with the Rev. R. Heber Newton, to publish in their popular "Lovell's Library," the sermons now in the course of delivery, on "The Right and Wrong Uses of the Bible." The whole series of sermons, seven in all, will be issued in one volume, printed from large type in neat 12mo form, paper covers, for 20 cents.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER—STUDIES IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

MARCH, 1883.

NOTE.—The Scripture verses to be committed to memory are indicated by an index [287] at the side.

A. D. 30.

March 4.

LESSON IX.—PERSECUTION RENEWED.

Acts 5. 17-32.

17 Then *a* the high-priest rose up, and all that were with him, which is the sect of the Sadducees, and were filled with *a* indignation,

a Chap. 4. 1. 2.—*o* Or, envy.

18. And *b* laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

b Luke 21. 12.

19 But *c* the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,

c Psa. 34. 7; Acts. 12. 7; chap. 16. 26; Heb. 1. 14.

20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people *d* all the words of this life.

d John 6. 68; 17. 3; 1 John 10. 11.

21 And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught.

e But the high-priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

e Chap. 4. 5, 6.

22 But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told,

23 Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within.

24 Now when the high-priest *f* and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.

f Luke 22. 4; chap. 4. 1.

25 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, The men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: *g* for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

g Matt. 14. 5; 21. 26.

27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high-priest asked them,

28 Saying, *h* Did not we straitly command you, that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

h Chap. 4. 18;—*i* Chap. 2. 23; 3. 15; 7. 52.—*j* Matt. 23. 34; 27. 25.

29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, *k* We ought to obey God rather than men.

k Gal. 1. 10.

30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged *l* on a tree.

l Chap. 10. 39; Gal. 3. 13; 1 Peter 2. 24.

31 Him *m* hath God exalted with his right-hand to be *n* a Prince and a *o* Saviour, *p* for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

m Chap. 2. 23; Phil. 2. 9; Heb. 2. 10; 12. 2.—*n* 1-s, 9. 6; Ezek. 34. 24; Dav. 9. 25; chap. 3. 15; Rev. 1. 5.—*o* Matt. 1. 21.—*p* Eph. 1. 7; Col. 1. 14.

32 And *q* we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

q John 15. 26.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

Two results followed God's judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira: the standard of purity was raised in the Church, so that no man dared to unite with it from selfish motives; and at the same time there was an increase of power over the world, as men realized that the Gospel was under a divine protection. The twelve apostles were held in honour, and multitudes thronged around them to listen to their words, and to receive their healing influence. Such throngs gathered day by day in Solomon's Porch, that the rulers again became uneasy and alarmed. A brief consultation was held by the leaders; the apostles were suddenly seized, and thrust into the common prison of the city for the night, until action should be taken on the morrow. But that night, while rulers and guards were both asleep, there was a rustle of wings over the prison, noiselessly the iron doors swung open, the chains fell off, and the apostles walked forth free. At daybreak their voice was heard once more in the temple proclaiming the words of eternal life. The council of the Jews met in their hall; the officers were sent for their prisoners, but returned in terror, declaring that while they found the doors shut and the keepers on guard, within they saw no man. A strange terror, a deep consciousness began to grow in the minds of the rulers that they were fighting against God's plan, and they feared what the result might be, yet would not confess themselves guilty of their Redeemer's blood, and seek his mercy. Suddenly appears in their presence a man just from Solomon's Porch, bringing news that the men who but yesterday were committed to prison are there preaching to the people. The captain of the temple and his guards surround the place, and arrest the twelve, but in no rough manner, for they are warned by the ominous looks of the people that the persecution is unpopular. The apostles are now in a body before the council of the Jewish people. Again the high priest,

Annas, sternly rebukes them for their conduct in proclaiming the forbidden name, and with man's lips declares, "Ye intend to bring this for his brethren that they are but the messengers of the God of Israel, who has raised his Son they dare not withhold the message of their King. The enraged council are ready to order them to death, but calmer counsels prevail; the apostles are beaten, but not slain, and bear the pain and shame with joy, glad to bear testimony for their Master.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 17. The high-priest. Probably Annas (as in Lesson VI.) who was regarded by the Jews as the true high-priest, though his son-in-law Caiaphas held the office. **Rose up.** An expression meaning that they were aroused to action by the prominence which the new gospel was obtaining, and the power which it was exerting. **All they that were with him.** Not all the Sanhedrin or supreme council, but those leaders who were in sympathy and affiliation with the high-priest. **Set of the Sadducees.** The smaller in number of the two Jewish sects, but more largely represented in the office-holding class than the Pharisees. They were rationalists, denying the resurrection and the future life, and hence were offended at the preaching of the apostles. **Indignation.** Angry both at the fact of the apostles preaching after they had forbidden them; and at the doctrine which they preached. 1. The boasted liberality of skeptics is a myth. None are more bigoted than unbelievers.

18 Laid their hands. Seized them roughly, by their police. **On the apostles.** Probably all the twelve were this time arrested. **In the common prison.** In the public jail of the city, in company with the lowest and vilest criminals; and, according to Oriental usage, left to starve unless supplied by their friends with food. 2. But souls may be free while bodies are chained.

19. The angel. Rather, as in Revised Version, "an angel." It is evidently related as a supernatural event, though some writers suppose that it was through the agency of a friend among the guard. If God could work one miracle, why not another? 3. God's angels are ever at work in behalf of his people. **Opened the prison doors.** 4. Lock and walls are no barrier in the way of God's purposes. **Brought them forth.** The purpose of the miracle was to arrest attention, and to quicken the conscience of the rulers, by making them see that they were fighting against God. And the miracle was not without its effect in the milder treatment of the apostles.

20. Go, stand and speak. The angel opens the prison and bids the disciples preach, but does not preach himself. It is the divine plan that men, and not angels, shall call their fellow-men to repentance. 5. We have a privi-

lege higher than belongs to the angels of God. **In the temple.** The post of duty, the place where they had been arrested, and the very centre of the opposition to the Gospel. **All the words of this life.** "Life" here means not the present nor the future life, but the spiritual life, the new life in Christ, which was the theme of apostolic preaching.

21. They entered into the temple. The place was probably Solomon's Porch, on the east of the court of the Gentiles. Ver. 12. **Early in the morning.** Rev. Ver., "about daybreak." They went at once, as soon as released, and were there in time for the morning sacrifice, at sunrise. On account of the heat of the climate in Palestine work begins with the first light, in the cool of the morning, and the hot noon time is taken for rest. **High-priest came.** For the purpose of holding the trial of the apostles, in the hall Gazith, the session-room of the Sanhedrin, in the courts of Israel and of the Priests, in the temple. **That were with him.** His immediate friends and partisans, who had called the meeting of the entire council. **The council.... and all the senate.** The two words mean about the same, the repetition being for the sake of emphasis. **Sent to the prison.** Where they had committed them on the day before, and supposed them now to be.

22, 23 When the officers came. The civil officers of the Sanhedrin, who were to execute its orders. **The prison.... shut.** The heavenly visitant had not only opened the doors, but closed them again, and so quietly that the escape of twelve men had been unnoticed. **Keepers standing without.** In the East the guards stand outside the entrance to the jail. **No man within.** They may have been the only prisoners, or the words may mean "no man of those whom we were seeking."

24. Captain of the temple. The chief of the Levite police in the temple quarter. **Chief priests.** The leaders of the priestly order, whether from rank or force of character. **Doubted of them.** "Were much perplexed concerning them," Rev. Ver. They could not understand the events nor their cause; and perhaps a fear and awe of the supernatural arose in their minds. **Whereunto this would grow.** They feared the results that might come to pass, in the strengthening of the Gospel, and the loss of their own influence. 6. God's ways are ever a marvel to men.

25, 26. Then came one. From Solomon's Porch into the Hall Gazith, within the area of the temple. **Standing in the temple.** "Near at hand, in this very building." **Teaching the people.** Showing thereby no intention of obeying the orders of the council. **Brought them without violence.** The apostles making no resistance, and the officers being careful not to treat them roughly. **Feared the people.** The people were friendly to the apostles, on account of their character, their good works, and the interest of

their teachings. The persecution was entirely instigated and maintained by the rulers. **Let . . . stoned.** Stoning was the expression of the popular abhorrence especially against acts of treason or blasphemy. It was appointed in the law as a method of execution, because it was the act, not of an official, but of the people in a body.

27, 28. Set them before the council. This was the second appearance of Peter and John, but the first of the other apostles. **High-priest asked.** It was the office of the high-priest to examine prisoners. **Did not we straitly command you?** Rev. Ver., "We straitly charged you." Straitly means "strictly." We would rather expect the first question to be "How did you escape?" but indignation at their disobedience and the teaching of Christ was uppermost in the feelings of the priest and the rulers. **In this name.** In all their wrath they carefully avoid mentioning the name of Jesus. **Filled Jerusalem.** Not that all the people had become believers, but the fame of the Gospel had filled the city. **Your doctrine.** Rather, as in Rev. Ver., "Your teaching." **This man's blood upon us.** "You intend to hold us up before the people as answerable for the blood of Jesus." Yet, a few months before, they had said, "His blood be on us!" Matt. 27. 25. 7. Sin looks very different before the crime and after it.

29, 30. Peter and the other apostles. Peter as the leader answering for the rest. **We ought.** 8. Oh, the weight of that word "ought!" No stronger impulse than duty can control action. **Obey God rather than men.** The logic of the speech is: (1) We ought to obey God; (2) God has raised up Jesus, and (3) Made us witnesses of the fact; (4) We cannot, therefore, refuse to bear testimony. **Hanged on a tree.** The word signifies "wood," referring to the cross, and it is noticeably one used by Peter, both in his discourses and his epistles. 1 Pet. 2. 24.

31. God exalted. Jesus, lifted up from a cross to a kingdom. **With his right hand.** This may read, as in margin of Rev. Ver., "at his right hand," the place of honour and power. **To be a prince.** The word strictly means "chief, or leader, one who leads the way." 9. Where Jesus leads we may follow. **To give repentance.** Repentance comes through the Spirit which is given as the effect of Jesus' appearance. **Forgiveness.** Which is made possible through the shedding of Jesus' blood.

32. We are his witnesses. It was to testify to the "Christhood" of Jesus, to the facts of his resurrection, and to the truth of the Gospel, that the apostles were appointed. **Of these things.** Literally, "these sayings," that is, "these things which we have just spoken." **Holy Ghost.** The Spirit of God, writing his testimony on the hearts of disciples. **Given to them that obey him.** A promise implied that if the council themselves

will obey the voice of the Spirit they will have the same assurance as that enjoyed by the apostles.

GOLDEN TEXT.

We ought to obey God rather than men. Acts 5. 29.

OUTLINE.

1. In the Prison, v. 17, 18.
2. In the Temple, v. 19-26.
3. Before the Council, v. 26-32.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Persecution renewed. Acts 5. 17-32.
Tu. Persecutions expected. 2 Tim. 3. 1-12.
W. Enduring persecution. 1 Pet. 4. 12-19.
Th. Persecution a blessing. Matt. 5. 3-16.
F. The affliction light. 2 Cor. 4. 6-18.
S. Patience in trouble. Psa. 37. 1-11.
S. Deliverance from trouble. Psa. 34. 1-16.

LESSON HYMNS.

Know, my soul, thy full salvation; 8, 7.
 Rise o'er sin, and fear, and care;
 Joy to find in every station
 Something still to do or bear.

Think what Spirit dwells within thee;
 What a Father's smile is thine;
 What a Saviour died to win thee:
 Child of heaven, shouldst thou repine?

No. 461, *New Hymn Book.* S. M.

Angels your march oppose,
 Who still in strength excel,
 Your secret, sworn, eternal foes,
 Countless, invisible;
 But shall believers fear?
 But shall believers fly?
 Or see the bloody cross appear,
 And all their powers defy!

Jesus' tremendous name
 Puts all our foes to flight;
 Jesus, the meek, the angry Lamb,
 A Lion is in fight.
 By all hell's host withstood,
 We all hell's host o'erthrow;
 And conquering them, through Jesus' blood,
 We still to conquer go.

No. 777, *New Hymn Book.* 7s & 6s.

Stand up! stand up for Jesus!
 Ye soldiers of the cross!
 Lift high his royal banner;
 It must not suffer loss;
 From victory unto victory
 His army will be led,
 Till every foe is vanquished,
 And Christ is Lord indeed.

Stand up! stand up for Jesus!
 The strife will not be long;
 This day the noise of battle,
 The next the victor's song.
 To him that overcometh
 A crown of life shall be;
 He with the King of glory
 Shall reign eternally.

Time.—A.D. 30.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Connecting Link.—Many miracles wrought by the apostles. Acts 5, 12-16.

Explanations.—*The high-priest*—Probably Annas, as in Lesson VI. *They that were with him*—His friends, many of whom were rulers. *Saltucos*—A class of Jews who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. *Filled with indignation*—Especially because the apostles preached the rising of the dead through Jesus. *Put them in the common prison*—In the jail of the city, where criminals were confined. *The angel*—God's angels are ready to help God's people. *Opened the . . . doors*—Without the knowledge of the jailers. Ver. 23. *Go, stand and speak*—The three commands to God's people everywhere. *In the temple*—Where the people met together. *Words of this life*—The life of the Gospel, which Jesus came to bring. *Early in the morning*—Thus meeting the people who came to attend the early sacrifice. *Called the council*—The great council of the Israelites, called the Sanhedrin. *Senate*—The elders and rulers. *The officers*—Those who waited on the council. *No man within*—The angel was stronger than the bars. *Heard these things*—That the apostles had escaped. *Doubted of them*—Were perplexed about the apostles. *Whereunto . . . would grow*—How the matter would end. *Standing in the temple*—Showing thus that they had not hidden in fear. *Without violence*—Not in chains, or dealing roughly with them. *Fearing the people*—The people were friendly to the apostles for their miracles of help and healing, and would have stoned any that tried to do them harm. *Straitly command*—Strictly order. *Do not teach in this name*—Annas would not mention the name of Jesus. *With your doctrine*—This word means "teaching." *This man's blood*—Making the people believe that they had murdered Jesus. *Obey God rather than men*—When God's commands and men's are opposed to each other. *Hanged on a tree*—The cross is thus spoken of. *To give repentance*—To make it possible to repent of sin, by sending the Spirit upon sinners. *So is the Holy Ghost*—The Holy Ghost bore witness by miracles wrought through the apostles.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. In the Prison,** v. 17, 18. Who were put in the prison? Did they deserve to go there? What is said in 1 Pet. 4, 16? Who put the apostles in prison? What made them angry at the apostles?
- 2. In the Temple,** v. 19-25. How did the apostles get out of prison? How did the keepers know of their escape? v. 23. How did they fulfil Psa. 34, 7? What three commands did the angel give? What did the apostles do? What took place in the council? What were the feelings of the rulers?
- 3. Before the Council,** v. 26-32. Who were brought before the council, and how? Why were they brought so carefully? What did the high-priest say to them? To what "name" did he refer? What did Peter answer in the GOLDEN

TEXT? How did he proclaim Jesus to them? What did he say that Jesus will give?

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. How God takes care of his people?
2. Whom we ought to obey?
3. What Christ gives to men?

The Lesson Catechism.—(For the entire school.) 1. Where were the apostles put by the rulers? In the common prison. 2. How were they set free? By an angel. 3. What did they then do? They preached in the temple. 4. Before whom were they again brought? Before the council. 5. What was their testimony concerning Jesus before the council? That he was Prince and Saviour.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The royalty of Christ.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. Before the Council,** v. 26-32. What was the manner of the re-arrest? State the charges made against the prisoners. What authority did Peter recognize? What crime did he charge upon the council? What office and work did he claim for the risen Christ? What proof of his assertion did Peter offer? How may the witness of the Holy Spirit be obtained?
- 2. In the Temple,** v. 19-25. How were the imprisoned apostles delivered? What other instances of deliverance through angelic aid have we? What command was laid upon the apostles? How was their obedience manifested? Why was the council called together again? What strange news perplexed them?
- 3. In the Prison,** v. 17, 18. Who joined the high-priest in this persecution? What attempt was made to silence the apostles? What had Jesus foretold should befall them? Luke 21, 12.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where do we learn—

- That deliverance from danger is not deliverance from duty?
- That divine truth in weak hands is able to overthrow the mighty?
- That God witnesses for those who witness for him?
- That only the highest duty claims the preference of our service?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Why were the chief priests angry at the apostles? Because of their great works. How did they try to stop them? By putting them in prison. Did God help them? He sent his angels to set them free. What command did the angels give? To go and preach in the temple. What were they to preach? Eternal life through faith in Christ. What astonished the judges? That the apostles would dare to disobey? Who again arrested them? The captains and officers. Did they harm them? No; for fear of the people. What question did the high-priest ask?

"Did we not forbid you to preach about Jesus?" What was their reply? [Repeat GOLDEN TEXT.] What did the chief priests fear? That the people would accuse them of killing Jesus. What do we learn from these things? The power of God. What else? The weakness of his enemies. Of what may we be sure? That God will take care of his friends. How should that encourage us? To stand up for Jesus.

WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

The Holy Spirit is given—To them that obey God. To them who declare what he has done for them. To them who stand up for Jesus when others are silent. To them who deny self that they may please Jesus.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

How God Helps his People in Persecution.

I. BY ANGELIC MINISTRY.

The angel of the Lord by night. v. 19.

"The angel of the Lord . . . round about." Psa. 34. 7.

II. BY DELIVERANCE.

Opened . . . doors, and brought them forth. v. 19.

"Doors were opened . . . bands were loosed." Acts 16. 26.

III. BY DIRECTION IN DUTY.

Go, stand and speak . . . words of this life. v. 20.

"What I tell you . . . speak ye in light." Matt. 10. 27.

IV. BY FEARS OF ENEMIES.

They doubted . . . whereunto this would grow. v. 24.

"No wisdom nor understanding . . . against the Lord. Prov. 21. 30.

V. BY THE RESPECT OF THE PEOPLE.

They feared the people, lest . . . stoned. v. 26.

"The common people heard him gladly." Mark 12. 37.

VI. BY IMPARTING COURAGE.

We ought to obey God rather than man. v. 29.

"What the Lord saith . . . that will I speak." 1 Kings 22. 14.

VII. BY THE TESTIMONY OF THE SPIRIT.

The Holy Ghost, whom God hath given. v. 32.

"Power . . . the Holy Ghost . . . upon you." Acts 1. 8.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Those who work for the cause of Christ must expect to meet with opposition and endure persecution. v. 17, 18.

2. Persecution generally comes from the rulers in religious matters, rather than from the secular powers. v. 17, 18.

3. The common prison may become a palace when one enters it for Christ's sake. v. 18.

4. God always aids his people in trial, sometimes by imparting strength, and sometimes by giving deliverance. v. 19.

5. Persecution should not cause God's workers to cease their testimony, but should make it more pronounced and bold. v. 20, 21.

6. God's persecuted saints often have all the greater power with men because of their trials. v. 26.

7. God's will is to be wrought even when persecution lies in the path. v. 29.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

15. How ought you to speak of God?

I ought to speak of God with reverence and praise.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.—Exod. 20. 7.

God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.—Psalms 89. 7.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

In turning over the pages of a magazine published for boys one is sure to find two or three pictures of a highly sensational and attractive type. I use the word sensational in no ill sense. I merely mean that the pictures are of a nature to draw attention and excite in the beholder the desire to know how the persons therein delineated got into the condition in which we see them, and, perhaps, yet more, how they ever get out again. Here is a shipwrecked crew, tossing in a small boat on the rough waves; a hunter, struggling in deadly conflict with a savage beast; a fugitive, hotly pursued by the enemy; and others of a similarly exciting nature. And the young reader hastens to find out all about the shipwreck—how the hunter got into that dangerous position—and whether the fugitive escaped in safety.

Now there are no less than three pictures in the verses for to-day's lesson, the same persons being drawn over again in each, only the drawing is with the pen of the writer instead of the pencil of the draughtsman. And they are pictures which ought to be full of interest to the youthful mind.

The first picture presents to us twelve men fast shut up in prison; the second shows us these very prisoners in full liberty, surrounded by crowds who listen to their teaching; the third displays the men who had regained their freedom once more in the hands of their enemies. Now, the questions which arise at once are: first, how did these men get thrown into prison? secondly, how did they manage to escape? and thirdly, how

was it that, having succeeded in escaping, they actually fell into the hands of those who had imprisoned them?

We have the answer to these questions given in the narrative, and summarized shortly in the Golden Text. "We ought to obey God rather than man." Obedience to God brought the twelve into prison; obedience to God caused their deliverance; obedience to God made them once more

Obedience to God brought the twelve into prison.

Peter and John had been commanded "not to speak at all, nor teach in the names of Jesus." This was contrary to the instructions of Him who had said: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." They had to choose whether God or man should be obeyed, and they chose the former. So multitudes were healed, and multitudes were "added to the Lord." And upon themselves came this penalty—the prison. But they were ready to meet it. It was not a thing unexpected. Jesus had told it them before. Luke 21. 12. The soldier knows perfectly well, when he goes out to battle, that he must certainly meet with hardship, probably obedience to his captain will lead him straight into all these. So with the followers of Christ. They cannot obey him and yet live at ease. It is not every soldier who has the post of danger, but each one must be ready to take it, nor must any be surprised to find himself there. When the boy who seeks to follow Christ finds himself the butt of his companions' ridicule, and it may be of something worse—when the youth who refuses to do a dishonest trick finds himself out of employment—when any one who labours zealously for Christ discovers that he is misrepresented and slandered—that he must not be surprised. These are some of the consequences of obedience to God.

Obedience to God caused the deliverance of the twelve. The prison was "shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors." There seemed no way of escape. But what will the general do who sees his soldiers in suffering and danger? Will he not come to their relief? Is he not bound in honour to do so if it is in his power? And so the Lord's honour is bound up with the deliverance and vindication of his servants. He will "show himself strong in behalf of those whose heart is perfect with him." 2 Chron. 16. 9. So an angel is sent to open the prison doors, and the apostles go forth in perfect freedom. And just so, when God's time is come, he can and does deliver his servants now. No man who follows Christ is really the loser for it. Deliverance and

vindication are some of the consequences of obedience to God.

Obedience to God made the twelve once more prisoners. The apostles were not delivered that they might go home comfortably and live in peace. Had they done so they would probably have been molested no more. Or had they chosen to leave Jerusalem, no doubt they might have succeeded in escaping. But this would have been contrary to their orders. And for their encouragement the Lord's command was repeated to them by the angel. They were delivered that they might continue to bear witness for him. And now they were again seized and placed at the bar of the council, where they gave their unalterable reason for all they had done:

"We ought to obey God rather than man."

With their witness to Christ before the council, as the one "exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour," our passage concludes, leaving the story, as it appears, unended. It is, perhaps, however, a better conclusion than if we read on to the end of the chapter; for the history of obedience to God is not ended on this earth. The antagonism between God and the world, between God's command and the world's will, goes on through the whole of life. The apostles are delivered indeed, but allowed to suffer after that. Deliverance and suffering go on to the end. But taking their stand on the salvation wrought by Christ, their Prince and Saviour, his witnesses must be bold to suffer for him until they are called to be with him where he is.

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Show the connection between this lesson and the last... Explain high-priest; Sadducees; common prison; angel of the Lord; captain of the temple, etc., etc.... Show the gradual progress in these appearances before the rulers: 1. In the apostles' testimony; 2. In the severity of their trials.... Show the spirit of the persecutors: 1. Unbelief, Cruelty; 4. Fear; 5. Consciousness of guilt.... The spirit of the persecuted Church: 1. Patience; 2. Testimony; 3. Consciousness; 4. Courage; 5. Faith.... Show how God helps his people in persecution. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline)... Find in the Bible similar deliverances of God's people from danger.... General teachings concerning persecution (See Additional Practical Lessons)... Our duty: 1. "Go, obey God," v. 29; 2. "We ought to obey God," v. 29; 3. "We are his wit-

nesses," v. 32... ILLUSTRATIONS. Courage. It was said over John Knox's coffin by the regent of Scotland, "There lies one who never feared the face of man!"... Duty to God, v. 29. Socrates' answer to his judges, "I honour you, O judges, but I honour God more!"... Faithfulness. Said Anacharsis to his enemies, "You may break the bones of Anacharsis, but you cannot break his will!"

References. FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA OF ILLUSTRATIONS: Ver. 17: Prose, 4405. Ver. 19; Poetical, 119; Prose, 136, 11191. Ver. 20: Prose, 9135. Ver. 24: Prose, 7132. Ver. 28: Prose, 7133. Ver. 29. Prose, 2297, 10178. Ver. 31: Prose, 7143. Ver. 32: Prose, 2052, 2054. FREEMAN'S HAND BOOK. VER. 17. The Sadducees, 695. Ver. 17: The Sanhedrin, 718. Ver. 26: The "captain," 787.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

INTRODUCTORY. When we see an engine at work we know there is power somewhere, though it may be out of sight. So the people saw the wonderful acts of the apostles, and felt sure that God must be doing these things, and the Church grew very fast. Tell how the apostles lived, and what they did.

LESSON THOUGHT. "God greater than all." To be taught: Why the apostles were persecuted. How God showed himself to be on their side. How they showed their faith in him.

1. Show what persecution is. A little boy who had been taught to pray went to a large school. At night he knelt by his bed in the long dormitory where the boys slept to pray. The boys laughed, called him names, threw things at him, and tried in every way to keep him from speaking to God. This was persecution. Show that they persecuted him because his act reproved them. It was so with the priests and rulers. If the apostles were right, they were very wrong, for they had killed the Jesus, who these men said was the Son of God!



2. Teach that the prison could not hide the apostles from God. He can enter the darkest prison as he can the darkest heart. He wanted these men to be about his work, and he took them from the prison, and put them in his temple to speak about him. Show that God thinks about us when we are in the darkest places. Print on the board "Words of Life," and give the angel's command, "Go, speak." He did not say,

"Speak the words of this book, of this Church," but "of this life." Show an empty purse. Can I give money to a beggar from this purse? No, because there is none in it. So we cannot give this life unless we have it. Show that it is the life of Jesus, and to be had by all who ask for it.

3. Tell of the surprise of the priests when they heard that the apostles were preaching again, and the conversation that followed. Teach that God is over all, and that the apostles really believe this, for they said they must obey him. Where do we find his laws? Compare this world's rulers with God, showing that everything of this world dies, while God never changes. Make plain the truth that God is a real Being to be obeyed and loved more than even father and mother. Show that his laws are wise and good, and lead to life. To follow this world's laws may lead away from God, and to sin and death.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, Bsq.



This diagram illustrates the suffering of the apostles for the sake of Christ. Their path of duty was made the path of persecution. It led to the prison door. If the blackboard is large enough write the Golden Text over the top. The words suffering and persecution may be red, the other words in blue or yellow; the stone wall in brown, and the prison door in white outline.

THE APOSTLES HAVE I
OBEYED GOD
RATHER THAN MAN!

GOD'S LOVE
TAKES CARE OF

HIS APOSTLES. | YOU.

Though cast down, never forsaken.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Night around the old prison! Dingy, dirty place, the moon is trying to drape its ugliness with its silver veil. There are keepers before the door. Now and then they listen. All quiet within! Then they sink back into their careless slumber. Are the moonbeams trying to enter the doorway and brighten the gloomy prison? There is certainly a Light at the door, and it mysteriously swings back. O Angel of the Lord, O Light for God's people in every dark place, awake the Lord's anointed in the prison-house! One is stirring. "Is it the moonlight I see streaming through that slit in the wall?" does he ask. "Is it this that awakens me?" He looks, and is startled to see that shining messenger from the distant vine presence! One by one they rise, and softly as shadows they steal out into liberty.

Morning around the old prison! It is the sharp, searching sunlight that falls and re-

veals the ugliness of the place. The keepers lounge before the gloomy door. "All quiet within!" still is the report. Officers now come from the Sanhedrin that has arranged an early reception for the prisoners. "We have bagged our game and now we will pluck it," is the Sanhedrin's complacent but the game has flown! The Sanhedrin is perplexed and alarmed. A messenger comes and hurriedly tells the council that the prisoners are "standing in the temple and teaching the people!" Plucky, loyal souls, out are hurried before the Sanhedrin. It is envy, hate, bigotry on one side; it is the courage of the Holy Ghost on the other. But will the apostles still disobey? We listen. And then we catch those memorable words giving a war-cry and a banner to every forlorn hope daring to open the attack on an entrenched wrong: "We ought to obey God rather than men."

A. D. 35.

LESSON X.—THE SEVEN CHOSEN.

Acts 6. 1-15.

March 11.

1 And in those days, *a* when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the *b* Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected *c* in the daily ministrations.

^a Psa. 72. 16; Mat. 13. 31; chap. 4. 4.—^b Chap. 9. 29; 11. 30.—^c Chap. 4. 35.

2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them and said, *d* It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

^d Exod. 18. 17; 2 Tim. 2. 4.

3 Wherefore, brethren, *e* look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

^e Deut. 1. 13; 1 Tim. 3. 7.

4 But we *f* will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

^f Chap. 2. 42.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude; and they chose Stephen, *g* a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, *h* and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

^g Chap. 11. 24.—^h Chap. 8. 5; 21. 5.

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when *i* they had prayed, *j* they laid their hands on them.

ⁱ Psa. 37. 5; Prov. 16. 3; chap. 1. 24; Phil. 4. 6; Jude 20.—^j chap. 8. 17; 9. 17; 13. 3; 1 Tim. 4. 14; 5. 22; 2 Tim. 1.

7 And *k* the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company *l* of the priests were obedient to the faith.

^k Col. 1. 6; 2 Tim. 3. 1.—^l John 12. 42.

8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue,

which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. 10 And *m* they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.

^m Exod. 4. 12; Isa. 54. 17; Luke 21. 15.

11 Then *n* they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against *o* Moses, and against God.

ⁿ Matt. 26. 59.

12 And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council,

13 And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law:

14 For *o* we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the *a* customs which Moses delivered us,

^o Chap. 25. 8.—^a Dan. 9. 24.—^a Or, rites; Heb. 8. 13; 9. 10.

15 And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of *q* an angel.

^q Matt. 22. 3.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

A period of rest from persecution is given to the Church in Jerusalem, and its growth begins to develop within itself latent elements of danger, in the voluntary communism, the abundant provision for the poor, and the varied elements of discontent in the rivalry of the Hebrews, or Palestinian Jews, and the Hellenists, or Jews of foreign ancestry, and there is danger that the Church may be rent into opposing sects instead of going forth to conquer the world. But the gathering storm is averted by the prudence and

self-sacrifice of the apostles, who harmonize all the elements by giving to all a share in the government of the Church. Among the seven appointed to the new order of deacons, there is one most prominent, Stephen, whose greatness causes even the apostles to sink out of notice. To him it was given, first of all, to catch a glimpse of the Gospel for all the world, Gentiles as well as Jews, and to preach salvation for all mankind. He sees the Christianity of the future, not a mere sect of the Jews, but a great world-religion, binding into one all races, and uniting the kingdoms of the world under the throne of Christ. His bold enunciation of the truth stirs up strife, and awakens the dormant spirit of persecution. The adversaries who cannot answer his words, nor resist the divine Spirit which dwells within him, seize him and drag him before the council. The elders of Israel in their hall hear the charge of blasphemy against the law and the temple, and then look upon the face of the accused man, which they behold lighted up with the power of grace within, and with the glory already beaming around the first martyr of the Church.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 1. In those days. An indefinite term, which may refer to several years. **Was multiplied.** Rev. Ver., "was multiplying;" by a constant growth. **A murmuring.** Not an open quarrel or complaint, but its foreshadowing in whispered discontent. 1. Small fault-finders, if not checked, soon grow into great strifes. **Grecians.** Frequently called Hellenists, Jews belonging to "the dispersion," or descendants of Jewish families in foreign lands, who had lost the Hebrew tongue, spoke Greek as their native language, and, though true Israelites, were less narrow than the **Hebrews**, who were Palestinian by birth, clung to the Hebrew, (though they spoke only its Aramaic dialect,) and were extremists in their hatred of all foreign customs. Between these two classes there was a constant rivalry. **Widows.** In the East, a very desolate class, since they were entirely dependent upon the relatives of the deceased husband, and often suffering extreme poverty. **Were neglected.** Those who distributed the bounty, being Hebrews, might not learn readily of cases of need in the other class. **Daily ministrations.** Greek "diakonias," or deaconship. There was probably a daily distribution of food to such as applied for it, and the cases were not carefully examined. 2. How much of trouble comes to the Church from its secular relations! 3. Since there was selfishness and clannishness even in the pentecostal Church, let us not look for the perfect Church on earth, but wait for it in heaven.

2. **Then the twelve.** They were wise in preventing evil by meeting the complaint in the spirit of conciliation. **Called the multitude.** A public meeting was held, where all had the right of attendance; but it is not necessary to suppose that all, or even a majority,

were present. **It is not reason.** "It is not fit," (Rev. Ver.) **Leave the word of God.** Cease from the preaching of the Gospel. **Serve tables.** Attend to the details of business; which in the East is mostly done sitting at a table. 4. The spiritual work of the Church is far more important than its secular concerns.

3. **Brethren.** Though apostles, they did not disdain to regard all the disciples of Christ as their brothers and equals. **Look ye out.** Their method of selection is suggestive, but not authoritative, to us, for it is not given as a command. The body of the disciples chose the officers, but the apostles confirmed the appointment, and inducted the appointees; so that both laity and clergy were united in the action. **Seven men.** Seven was a well-known number to the Hebrews, and would naturally suggest itself. Perhaps one was chosen to act on each day of the week. **Honest report.** Not only men of upright character, but of spotless reputation; men in whom all would have confidence. **Full of the Holy Ghost.** Men of spiritual endowments, and with a rich personal experience. **Wisdom.** Intellectual capacity and business ability. 5. Note here the three elements in the character of an official member; (1) Uprightness; (2) Spirituality; (3) Executive ability, **Whom we may appoint.** As the funds had been given to the apostles, it was necessary that they should have a voice in appointing the stewards.

4. **We will give ourselves to.** Rev. Ver., "We will continue steadfastly in." **Prayer.** Both the public worship of the Church and the private communion with God which gives it all its power. **Ministry of the Word.** Literally, "the deaconship of the word," as in verse 2. While the seven were to serve in one form of deaconship or ministry, the twelve were to serve in another. 6. Sacred and secular is all one in God's work.

5. **Pleased.** The spirit shown by the apostles healed the growing tendency to separation. **They chose.** These men are generally called deacons, but the name is not applied to them here or elsewhere in this book. They are spoken of as "the seven," Acts 21. 8. All have Greek names, but it is not certain that all belonged to the Grecian or Hellenistic section of the Jews. Only the two first-named are mentioned in the after history. **Stephen.** From the manner in which his name is presented, he would appear to have been a leader, and his character is indicated both in the brief clause **full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.** He was, perhaps, next to his successor, Paul, the greatest man in the early Christian Church, the first to catch the thought of salvation for the Gentiles, as Gentiles, and the first in the noble army of martyrs. His only remaining discourse, delivered without preparation and before enemies, is a model of compactness of plan and of power, and not without good reason is the most fully reported of any address in the New Testament, save the Sermon on the Mount. **Philip.** A few events of his history are given in the next

chapter. Driven out of Jerusalem, he preached in Samaria and along the sea-coast, until he settled at Caesarea, where, long afterward his former persecutor, Saul, met him as Paul the apostle. **Nicolas, the proselyte.** The proselytes were people who had abandoned the worship of idols and adopted the Jewish faith. Those who simply accepted the Scriptures without becoming Jews were called "proselytes of the Gate," that is, outside the door of the temple; while those who had received circumcision were called "proselytes of righteousness." To this class Nicolas belonged. He was the first person not of the race of Abraham admitted to the Christian Church. **Antioch.** A Syrian city near the north-eastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea.

6. Set before the Apostles. For their approval. **When they had prayed.** For divine direction in the choice and for a blessing upon the men chosen. **7. All work should be sanctified by prayer. Laid their hands on them.** A ceremony here mentioned for the first time in the Christian history, though suggested by the Old Testament. It was a symbol of the endowment of one with the power possessed by another by a divine influence.

7. Word of God increased. By the rapid growth in the number of disciples; as a result of the healing of diseased, a more thorough administration and oversight, a better division of labour, and a general spirit of work for Christ. **Disciples** here means believers in Jesus simply, not all of whom possessed a living personal experience of salvation, or an enlarged view of the Gospel. **Company of the priests.** Various causes may be given for the adhesion of the priests to the Gospel: (1) There was a standing antagonism between the priests and the scribes, and as the latter were opposed to the Gospel, the former would be all the more favourable. (2) The priests were very numerous, were poorly supported, many were in deep poverty, and oppressed by their rulers, the chief priests, and would gladly welcome a change. (3) The preaching of Stephen might have presented what Paul afterward taught—the passing away of the ritual and the institution of something better.

8. Stephen. Peter sinks to the background, and Stephen comes to the front. He was a Grecian Jew, holding broad views, and proclaimed the truth in a new light, as may be seen from the charges preferred against him. No doubt he struck the key-note of Gentile salvation, as may be ascertained by close study of his speech and its purpose. (See next chapter.) **Full of faith.** "Grace" [Rev. Ver.] is the better rendering. **Power.** The divine influence accompanying his ministry. **Wonders and miracles.** Though appointed for a secular work in the Church, he at once began to preach, and the same results attended his labours as those of the apostles.

9. Synagogue. The place where the Jews met for the reading of the word and worship, but not for sacrifices. There were more than

three hundred synagogues in Jerusalem; Jews of each nationality and of every shade of views holding services apart. **Libertines.** "Freedmen." Jews whose ancestors had been slaves, taken in war, and afterward set free. They came mainly from Rome. **Cyrenians.** Jews from Northern Africa. **Cilicia.** The land of the young Saul of Tarsus, who in this synagogue doubtless met Stephen. **Asia.** Not the continent, but Proconsular Asia, embracing the three provinces of Mysia, Lydia, and Caria, on the western end of Asia Minor.

10, 11. Not able to resist. He showed the truth by the Scriptures, and with such arguments and earnestness that his antagonists were silenced. **The Spirit.** Here, not natural ability, but the divine influence accompanying his words. **Suborned men.** Hired men to give false or perverted testimony. **Blasphemous words.** Words intended to pervert men from the worship of God and obedience to the law. **Against Moses.** Against the laws of Moses. **8. Persecution is ever the resort of those who have no arguments.**

12. Stirred up the people. Thus far the opposition had come from the rulers; now, as the Gospel for the Gentiles begins to appear in the teaching, all the pride and hatred of the Jews toward other nations make them the enemies of the new truth. **Elders and the scribes.** The rulers and the masses joined hands in common cause against the Gospel. **Came upon him.** Suddenly, while in the act of teaching. **Brought him to the council.** Without formal arrest, or delay for investigation, he was dragged before the Sanhedrin in their session in the temple.

13, 14. False witnesses. False in their spirit, and distorting his words, but not telling absolute falsehoods. **This holy place.** The temple. **Destroy this place.** He had undoubtedly repeated Christ's prediction of the destruction of the temple and the city, and may have declared that the Gospel was not an institution dependent upon holy places. **Change the customs.** Perhaps a perversion of a statement that Christ had made an end of the law and the minute regulations of the scribes.

15. All that sat. As they sat in a double semicircle, with the accused man in the centre. **Saw his face.** This is Paul's reminiscence of what Saul saw: a memory of a face that was ever in his mind. **The face of an angel.** Lit up with a strange beauty, a joy of the heart within shining upon the countenance. **9. Oftener than many suppose,** the inner character looks out of the face, and stamps its impress on the personal appearance.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom. Acts 6, 3.

OUTLINE.

1. The Seven, v. 1-7.
2. Stephen, v. 8-15.

HOME READINGS.

- M. The seven chosen. Acts 6. 1-15.
- Tu. Bishops and deacons. 1 Tim. 3. 1-13.
- W. Diversities of gifts. 1 Cor. 12. 1-13.
- Th. The building of character. Eph. 4. 1-16.
- F. The use of endowments. Matt. 25. 14-30.
- S. Stephen's address. Acts 7. 1-16.
- S. Stephen's rebuke. Acts 7. 44-53.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 441, *New Hymn Book.* S. M.

A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky :

To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfil ;
O may it all my powers engage
To do my Master's will !

Help me to watch and pray,
And on thyself rely ;
Assured, if I my trust betray,
I shall for ever die.

No. 773, *New Hymn Book.* 8s & 7s.

What a Friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear !
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer !
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer !

Are we weak and heavy-laden,
Cumbered with a load of care ?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee ?
Take it to the Lord in prayer ;
In his arms he'll take and shield thee,
Thou wilt find a solace there.

No. 774, *New Hymn Book.* 8s & 7s.

Take the name of Jesus with you,
Child of sorrow and of woe ;
It will joy and comfort give you ;
Take it, then, where'er you go.
Precious name, O how sweet !
Hope of earth and joy of heaven.

Take the name of Jesus ever,
As a shield from every snare ;
If temptations round you gather,
Breathe that holy name in prayer.

O the precious name of Jesus,
How it thrills our souls with joy,
When his loving arms receive us,
And his songs our tongues employ !

Time.—A.D. 35. There is some reason for supposing that this lesson embraces a period of two years, from 35 to 37 A.D.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Connecting Links.—1. The advice of Gamaliel. Acts 5. 33-39. 2. The release of the apostles. Acts 5. 40-42.

Explanations.—*In those days*—Perhaps even a few years after the events of the last lesson. *Multiplic'd*—While the Church was growing rapidly. *A murmuring*—A complaint, which might have risen to a quarrel. *Grecians*—The Jews who were of foreign birth and language. *Hebrews*—Jews native to Palestine. *Widows were neglected*—Being foreigners, were apt to be passed over. *Daily ministrations*—The supply of food given, perhaps every day, by the Church. *Twelve*—The apostles. *Multitude of the disciples*—The great body of the Church. *Not reason*—Not fitting or suitable. *Leave the word*—Stop preaching in order to give alms. *Serve tables*—By doing the work for the poor. They felt that their time should be given to God's work. *Seven men of honest report*—Men who were known to be good. *Wisdom*—They would need wisdom for this work of caring for the poor and distributing the gifts of the Church. *We will give ourselves*—The apostles would do nothing but pray and preach. *They chose*—Stephen and Philip are the only ones of whom anything is known. *Proselyte*—One born a Gentile who had become a Jew. *Laid their hands on them*—Setting them apart to their office. *Word of God increased*—That is, the number of those who believed in the Gospel. *Priests were obedient*—Many Jewish priests believed in Jesus. *Stephen . . . did great wonders*—By his faith he wrought miracles. *The synagogue*—A place where Jews met to worship, but not like the Temple, where sacrifice was offered. *Not able to resist*—Stephen preached with such power that none could answer him. *Suborned men*—They persuaded or hired men to speak falsely about him. *Blasphemous words*—Words which would show contempt for the law of God. *Before the council*—The body of men which ruled the Jews. *This holy place*—The Temple, where the council met. *The law*—The law of God as given by Moses. *Destroy this place*—Jesus had said that the place would be destroyed on account of the sins of its people. *Change the customs*—The laws and usages given by Moses. *Face of an angel*—Shining with glory given by the Lord.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. **The Seven**, v. 1-7. What trouble arose in the Church ? Who were these two classes of people ? What was the cause of the trouble ? What was this daily ministrations ? How was the murmuring stopped ? What spirit did the apostles show ? Who chose the seven men ? What were they chosen for ? What is said of these men in the GOLDEN TEXT ? What was done with these men ? What was the result to the Church ?

2. **Stephen**, v. 8-15. Who was Stephen, and what was his character ? What did he do ? How was Luke 21. 15 fulfilled in him ? What did his enemies say against him ? What did they do, and for what purpose ? What four charges did they bring against him ? How did this fulfil Matt. 10. 17 ? What had Jesus said in Matt. 24. 2, and John 4. 21 ? How was this a false witness against Stephen ? How did Stephen's face look ? How did this show the truth of 2 Cor. 3. 18 ?

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where does this lesson show—

1. How to prevent quarrels?
2. How to work for Christ?
3. How Christ's glory is shown by his disciples?

The Lesson Catechism.—(For the entire school.) 1. For what work were the seven appointed? To help the poor. 2. What kind of men were chosen? Men with the Holy Ghost and wisdom. 3. Who was the leader among the seven? Stephen. 4. What did he do? Preached the Gospel with power. 5. What did his enemies do? Accused him to the council. 6. How did his face appear before the council? Like that of an angel.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The organization of the Church.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **The Seven.** v. 1-7 Who are meant by the "Grecians"? What grievance had they? What excuse did the apostles urge? What new arrangements did they propose for the churches and what for themselves? What action was taken by the Church? What qualifications did the seven deacons possess? [See GOLDEN TEXT.] How were they ordained? What success followed this action?

2. **Stephen.** v. 8-15. Wherein lay the reason of Stephen's success? With what opposition did he meet? What baffled his opponents? To what artifice did they resort? What false charge did they make? When had a similar charge been made against Jesus? How did Stephen receive the accusation?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

What will result from undertaking too many duties?

What should be the characteristics of those who fill the offices of the Church?

What is a resistless argument against false accusation?

Where do we learn that systematic, earnest effort for Jesus blesses the Church?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Did God prosper the work of the apostles? The number of believers grew daily. What complaint was now made? That some of the poor were neglected. What is meant by "the ministrations"? The giving out of money and of food. What did the apostles do? Called a meeting of the believers. For what purpose? To choose men to do this work. How many were chosen? Seven, among whom was Stephen. What did the apostles do? They laid hands upon them in prayer. What wonderful thing happened? Many of the priests were converted. Why were Stephen's works especially blessed? Because he was full of faith and the Holy Ghost. Who disputed with Stephen? Learned Jews. What provoked their anger? That Stephen was wiser than they. What did they do with him? Brought him before the council. Whom did

they bribe to accuse him? Bad men, who were liars. What did they expect? That Stephen would be afraid. What did they see? His face, like that of an angel.

WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

Christ will choose you for his friend—If you are prayerful and obedient. If you are willing to do his work before yours. If you think of others before self.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.**The Christian Worker.****I. HIS UPRIGHT CHARACTER.**

Men of honest report. v. 3.

"He must have a good report." 1 Tim.

3. 7.

II. HIS SPIRITUALITY.

Full of the Holy Ghost. v. 3.

"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." Matt. 3. 11.

III. HIS FAITH.

Stephen, a man full of faith. v. 5.

"Faith by the same Spirit." 1 Cor. 12.

18.

IV. HIS EARNESTNESS.

Full of faith and power, great wonders. v. 8.

"Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

Rom. 12. 11.

V. HIS INSIGHT INTO TRUTH.

Not able to resist.....wisdom.....spirit.

v. 10.

"Knowledge of his will....spiritual understanding." Col. 1. 9.

VI. HIS COURAGE.

His face as.....the face of an angel. v. 15.

"Thy face strong against their faces,"

Ezek. 3. 8.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.**The Requirements for the Growth of the Church.**

1. The growth of the Church requires a spirit of unity and mutual conciliation on the part of the varied elements in the membership. v. 1, 2.

2. The growth of the Church requires that its secular and financial interests be organized, directed, and administered as carefully as its spiritual interests. v. 2, 3.

3. The growth of the Church requires that the men in its official positions should be upright, consecrated, and wise in administration. v. 3.

4. The growth of the Church requires a ministry in fellowship with God and faithfully preaching the word. v. 4.

5. The growth of the Church requires that the lay-forces, as well as the ministry, shall be at work for the salvation of souls. v. 7, 8.

6. The growth of the Church is fostered by a broad and liberal interpretation of truth. v. 8-14.

7. The growth of the Church is aided when those who labour for the Gospel show courage in dying for it. v. 15.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

1. Do you know what you are?

I know that I am a creature of God, for he made me, both body and soul.

Thus said the Lord,—I have made the earth, and created man upon it.—Isaiah 14. 11, 12.

Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews.—Job 10. 11.

The Lord formeth the spirit of man within him.—Zech. 12. 1.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

I WAS speaking last time of the pictures of wonderful adventures generally found in periodicals published for boys. No doubt such pictures and the stories that accompany them excite in the minds of many young people a desire after the marvellous and strange, and make the round of daily life look dull in comparison with such thrilling narratives. And even our Christian boys and girls are apt to weary of

“The daily round, the common task,”

and to think they might do great things if their lot were only cast in different scenes and more stirring circumstances. Where is there room for the exercise of faith, love, zeal, devotion, courage, in the quiet and almost unvarying routine of daily duty? What opportunity has that boy in the store or in the workshop, or that girl who has to sweep the rooms or mind the baby, of serving and glorifying God?

Our lesson to-day supplies an answer. We are ready to look upon those early days of the Church in Jerusalem as very stirring and very important ones. So they were. Among the multitudes in Judea (not to speak of the great world around) those few thousand followers of Jesus were but a handful. The work before them was great, sufficient to rouse all the energies of a noble spirit, and more than sufficient to daunt any whose trust was not in the divine power and presence of the risen Lord. They were wonderful days truly. But human life was as common and as needy a thing as ever, and there were ordinary duties to be fulfilled, and ordinary wants to be met, just as there are now. And the peace and love and unity of the early Church were first threatened by a question which concerned just these ordinary wants and duties.

Whether the Hellenistic or “Grecian” widows had really been less cared for than

the Hebrew widows we do not know. At any rate it was supposed that they had. It may be that the work of distribution to the needy had been done hurriedly and without due consideration—perhaps by some who began to grudge giving their time to these minor matters. Anyhow a jealousy arose, which broke out into open murmuring, and must have marred the testimony borne for Christ by the Church as a whole.

So the affair came under the notice of the apostles. Did they content themselves with condemnation of the sin, and exhortation to contentment and mutual forbearance? No, the thing must be remedied, and men chosen to do it. Did they then propose to put it into the charge of those who were the least gifted, as work that might be done by any one?

Look at the direction. The assembly were to choose seven men, not merely “of honest report,” but “full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom.” The work to be done was not that to which the apostles had been called. Theirs was the ministry of “the word.” This was the ministry of “tables.” But for a man to perform it rightly in the sight of God he must have the Spirit of God, like Joseph in Egypt, (Gen. 39. 2; 41. 38,) and like Israel’s workers of old. Exod. 36. 1, 2. And he must not only have that blessed Spirit, hallowing his mind and sanctifying his conduct, but he must have wisdom by means of that Spirit, such wisdom as to guide him in every step of this daily recurring work, that it might be done fairly, lovingly, and without causing offence.

Of these seven, all of whom would be particularly acceptable (as we gather from their Greek names) to the Grecian members of the community, there are but two of whom anything further is told us. But their work generally seems to have been attended with blessing. They left the apostles free to preach the word without interruption; they removed the discontent which had begun to clog the spiritual life of the Church; life and growth, extension and consistency, (ver. 7,) were promoted by means of their ministry. Here was a work which, though it looked at first sight ordinary enough, was worth doing, and could not have been done but by men who had the Spirit.

But to Stephen there soon came yet larger opportunities. His “faith and power” went beyond the ordinary duties of his calling, and showed themselves in “signs and wonders.” Next he had to defend the doctrine of Christ and speak boldly for his Lord against angry and cavilling opponents. And then he was called, like the apostles themselves, to the bar of the council, to answer a charge even more serious than the one

which had been brought against them. They had taught in the name of Jesus. He was accused of teaching that Jesus should actually change the customs established by Moses. Stephen's daily routine was over, and he was fast nearing the honour of martyrdom!

1. Notice two lessons taught by this history. The common work of every-day life is of great importance in the sight of God. To do it "as to the Lord" and for his glory, each one needs to be filled with the Spirit. Some work needs the Spirit and wisdom; some, the Spirit and patience; some, the Spirit and energy; some, the Spirit and prudence; some, the Spirit and kindness. All need the Spirit if they are to be performed so as to please God and to be helpful to the Church. And no work, however mean, that is done in the Spirit, can fail to be thus pleasing and helpful.

2. Where God sees that a servant of his is ready for higher opportunities he will certainly give them. What a work he gave to the boy who had been a slave in Potiphar's house! What a work to the little maid who waited on Naaman's wife! What witness-bearing and what a crown of glory to the man appointed simply to distribute supplies to the needy! There are opportunities springing up about the path of every true follower of Christ, and to him that is faithful in a little more is given.

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Show the three elements in the Church, of Hebrews, Grecians, Proselytes; their differences; the dangers of division, and how it was avoided. . . . Dissensions in the Church; how promoted, ver. 1: 1. By varied elements; 2. By lack of supervision. 3. By money-matters, etc. . . . Dissensions, how avoided: 1. By conciliation; 2. By system, organization; 3. By having godly men in office, etc.; 4. By recognition of all elements in Church government. . . . Results of healing dissension: 1. Unity; 2. Labour; 3. Progress; 4. Opposition from the world. . . . Stephen, the Christian worker. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline. . . . The requirements for growth and prosperity in the Church. (See Additional Practical Lessons. . . . The Church which is here commended as an example: 1. United, though of varied elements; 2. Organized in all departments; 3. With good, wise, and earnest officers; 4. With a consecrated ministry; 5. With broad views of truth, (Stephen. . . . Warnings of the lesson: 1. Against sectional spirit; 2. Against undue power in the clergy; 3. Against

neglect of the poor, etc.; 4. Against perversion of truth, v. 11, 13. . . . ILLUSTRATIONS. The ancient Romans, while in sectional strife between the orders of their people, were for centuries unable to gain power outside of their own walls, but when all orders were united, and their arms turned against their enemies, Rome soon conquered the world. . . . The strongest iron is made by welding different kinds of iron together; so the Church is all the stronger for its varied elements. . . . A picture on porcelain is made beautiful and brilliant when so hung that the light may shine through it; so Stephen's face shone with the light within.

References. FOSTER'S ILLUSTRATIONS: Ver. 2: Prose, 6266. Ver. 3: Prose, 9587, 9590. Ver. 4: Prose, 5609, 3944. Ver. 5: Prose, 9554. Ver. 7: Prose, 9162. Ver. 8: Prose, 11047. Ver. 10: Prose, 7227, 11044. Ver. 15: Poetical, 4017. . . . FREEMAN: Ver. 12: The council, 718.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. "Love one another." Print in large letters, "A Great Family. A Great Love. A Great Faith."

1. Talk about the great family. There were now thousands of believers in Jesus, and they were all brothers and sisters, because they all had one Father. Tell that God put it into the hearts of the rich ones to give money to help the poor ones, and the apostles spent some of this money in buying food for the poor widows. The family grew so large, and this took so much time, that by-and-by the apostles had little time left in which to teach about Jesus; so they said there must be men to take care of this great family, who had nothing else to do. Tell about the large meeting, and the choosing of men whose business it should be to look after the poor, so that the apostles might give all their time to teaching the truth about Jesus.



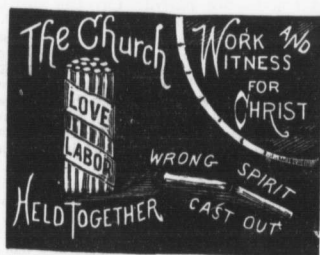
2. Read the names of the seven chosen, and tell what their work was. Explain that a deacon is one who serves, or helps. Make an open hand, and get children to tell what it is in the heart that opens the hand. Draw a heart around the hand and print "love" in the palm of the hand. Teach that these deacons were glad to serve their poor brothers and sisters, because God had put love into their hearts. Read, slowly and impressively, Matt. 25: 34-40, and lead children to see that helping God's suffering ones is helping him. Show that children may have

a part in such work, and that there are many things to be given which do not cost money, such as love, kind words, cheerful help, etc. Ask how many would like to be little deacons, and serve God by serving the people whom they meet?

3. Print "Stephen" on the board, and tell that he was a wonderful man. Show two cups, one much larger than the other, and show that both may be full, and yet one holds much more than the other, and is, therefore, worth the most as a cup. So all the deacons were good men, and full of the Holy Ghost, yet Stephen was a larger man in soul, and, therefore, could hold more love and faith. Tell that he worked miracles, and that this made the enemies of Jesus hate him. Tell that they brought him to trial, and found men to tell lies about him, and that when they looked at him they saw his face shining like that of an angel. Teach that a great faith is a great belief in God, and this fills the heart with hope and joy, which shines out in the face.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, HQ.



The Church is here represented as a collection of separate pieces, bound together by love and labour, that is, a spirit of love for Christ and his people, and a spirit of work that makes all willing to labour for the Master in whatsoever capacity he or she

may be called. There can be no unity in the Church if any wrong spirit is kept therein. It must be cast out and destroyed. Our duty is to work and witness for Christ.

**IF I WOULD DO MY MISSION WORK
IF I MUST DO MY MASTER'S WILL.**

Lesson Word-Pictures.

O solemn hush attending that first ordination to the diaconate of the Church of Christ! There are the seven to be set apart—how many of them to death! They stand before the apostles, Peter, James, John, and the others. We hear the voice of prayer, and then the seven bow as the hands of consecration are laid upon them. As we recall ordination scenes that we have witnessed, the look backward through the glass of memory is extended far away till our vision seems to reach this chapter in Acts, and we stand amid the early Church, see the bending forms, and hear the consecrating prayers at this first ordination. Upon Stephen is set conspicuously the seal of the Holy Ghost, to be seen ere long in his very face. He disputed with "certain of the synagogue" of the Libertines and others. It was a hot dispute. It may have been kindled in the synagogue itself with its two divisions of male and female worshippers, its seats of honour for elders, doctors, and others, its leader at his desk going before the people in their prayers. The flame of controversy may have swept out to the street-corners, the city gates, the temple-courts, burning wherever Stephen and his opponents met. They are embittered by his skill. They make a bloodhound of rulers and people, and set it springing upon him. He is hustled before the Sanhedrin. Around him is a gabbling mob of false witnesses and their adherents, while it is a mob before him though in high judicial positions—two mill-stones waiting to turn and crush him. And yet his face was "as it had been the face of an angel." Upon it was already falling the everlasting light of that Presence before whom he was quickly to be ushered.

A. D. 37.

LESSON XI.—THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR.

Acts 7. 54-60.

March 18.

54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

56 And said, Behold, *a* I see the heavens opened, and the *b* Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

a Matt. 3. 16.—*b* Dan. 7. 13; Heb. 9. 24

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice,

and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

e Heb. 13. 12.—*d* Lev. 24. 16.—*e* Deut. 13. 9; 17. 7.

59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive *f* my spirit.

f Psal. 51. 5.

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a

loud voice, *g* Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he *k* fell asleep.

g Matt. 5. 44; Luke 6. 28; 23. 34.—A 1 Thess. 4. 13; Rev. 14. 13.

1 And *i* Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem: and they *j* were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

i Chap. 7. 58.—*j* chap. 11. 19.

2 And devout men carried Stephen by his burial, and *k* made great lamentation over him.

k 2 Sam. 3. 31.

3 As for Saul, *l* he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison.

l 1 Cor. 15. 9; Gal. 1. 13; Phil. 3. 6; 1 Tim. 1. 13.

4 Therefore *m* they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.

m Matt. 10. 23; chap. 11. 19; 1 Cor. 14. 31.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

Stephen, with his radiant face, stands in the council hall, while before him sit in array the seventy-two elders who are to pass judgment upon him. The witnesses have presented their testimony, false in spirit rather than in word, and the accused man rises to reply. In the throng of listeners stands one young man of earnest purpose, who presses down his convictions, fights against the Spirit, and hears Stephen's speech with anger all the greater because it is unanswerable. The address of Stephen, his only recorded public utterance, a fragment, spoken without preparation from a full heart, is reported more fully than any other in this book of the Acts. Its aim was to show that God's plan was larger than the limits of Palestine, embracing all the world; that from the beginning it had been opposed by the unbelief and perverseness of his people, and that Jesus was the fulfilment of a line of divine indications. He is interrupted by the wrath of his hearers, but turns his eyes upward from the circle of scowling faces, and sees above the glory of the Shechinah, and beside it the form of his Saviour standing to welcome him. With such a vision beaming upon his sight, the martyr is not moved resisting without the gate, and without even the forms of trial prepare for their bloody deed. The witnesses strip off their garments, and cast them at the feet of a young man who, now a leader in the persecution, soon shall become a leader in preaching, and in his turn a sufferer for the truth. The stones fall, mingling with the sound of Stephen's dying prayer for his enemies, and the noblest soul of the pentecostal Church ascends to his rest, while young Saul looks on in misguided satisfaction. The persecution thus inaugurated is pursued with vigor. While devout men in horror at the murder lay the mangled body of Stephen to rest with sorrow, Saul pursues his bloody work, scattering the assemblies of disciples, scourging the believers in the very synagogue, dragging blameless men and delicate women to prison, striving to root out the very name of Jesus. The dispersed disciples find refuge in other cities and pro-

vinces, but wherever they go the word goes with them, and the light quenched in Jerusalem for a time soon appears shining from new centres in other lands.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 54. When they. The Jewish council or Sanhedrin, before which Stephen was standing on trial. **These things.** Both the severe denunciation of Stephen's final words and the logical drift of the entire speech. **Cut to the heart.** Literally, "sawn through and through," an expression indicating anger and frenzy without repentance. **Gnashed on him.** Their faces showed their uncontrollable hate and murderous determination.

55, 56. Full of the Holy Ghost. Contrast the scowling faces of the crowd and the shining face of Stephen; the spirit of Satan in one, and the fullness of the Holy Spirit in the other. **Looked up steadfastly.** The vision was in the heart of Stephen, not seen with the outward eye, yet it was none the less real. **Saw the glory of God.** The visible manifestation of the presence of God, known as the Shechinah in the tabernacle. 1. So God still sometimes reveals his glory to the dying spirit of his first martyr. **On the right hand.** The place of power and honour. 2. See here the tokens of a living and a divine Saviour. 3. What Stephen saw in that hour we too may see in the hereafter. **Son of man.** He gives his dying testimony to the truth of the Gospel message, that Jesus is the Son of God; and he uses the term which Jesus had himself used, "Son of man," in reference to his office as mediator; a term which is not again used by others in speaking of him.

57. They cried out. Both the council of the rulers, and probably, also, the rabble in attendance. **Stopped their ears.** As if refusing to listen to such blasphemy. **Ran upon him.** This was the wild act of a mob, not the fulfilment of a sentence by a tribunal. The forms of trial were not observed as in the condemnation of Jesus, probably because the Roman governor was not at that time in the city to enforce order.

58. Cart him out of the city. The Jewish custom was to execute death sentences outside the wall of the city. The place of Stephen's death has been variously assigned to a point near what is now known as the Damascus Gate, on the north of the city; and to a gate north of the temple area, leading into the valley of Jehoshaphat, called St. Stephen's Gate. **Stoned him.** This was a common form of execution among the Jews, especially upon those guilty of blasphemy. All the details of the execution were prescribed in the law, and even in the murder of Stephen the forms were carefully observed. **The witnesses.** Those who had given the testimony in chap. 6. 13, 14, and were required to cast the first stone upon the condemned man. **Laid down their clothes.** Their loose outer garments, which

would have encumbered them in their work. **At a young man's feet.** He may have been about thirty-five years old when he took this active part in the persecution. **Whose name was Saul.** This was the first appearance upon the scene of one who, next to the Saviour, did more to establish the Gospel and save the world than any other man in history. He was born at Tarsus, brought up in the study of the law at Jerusalem, but was probably absent during the ministry and death of Jesus. There is some reason to suppose that he had known Barnabas before he became a disciple, and had other friends in the Church. But he was himself opposed to the new religion, and strove to stifle his own convictions by persecuting it. 4. See how Christ shows his power in transforming his bitterest enemy into his greatest apostle.

59. They stoned Stephen. Perhaps showing by the repetition of the verb that the stones were falling while the martyr was praying. **Calling upon God.** [Rev. Ver., "calling upon the Lord." Stephen, while full of the divine Spirit, and privileged with a view of the unseen, addresses Jesus as God, and calls upon him as no saint or angel is addressed in Scripture. **Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.** He calls upon the Lord Jesus, as the dying Jesus had called upon his Father (Luke 23. 46.), showing that he regarded Jesus as God.

60. He kneeled down. Dying not as a malefactor but as a saint, in calmness, and as if unconscious of the scene around him. **Cried with a loud voice.** Which never ceased to echo in the ears of at least one who heard it. **Lay not this sin to their charge.** Literally, "Weigh not against them this sin." The dying saint follows the example of his dying Saviour in a prayer for his enemies (Luke 23. 34.), showing at once a knowledge of the events of Christ's death, and a recognition of himself as dying in some sense like his Master. 5. Even in death the thoughts of the saint are upon his Saviour. 6. He who has lived like Christ will have his spirit in death. **He fell asleep.** The usual Christian expression for dying; indicating that his end was peaceful even though stones were falling and angry voices were sounding around him.

1. Saul was consenting. Literally, "was taking pleasure in." Not a malignant, frenzied pleasure; but the satisfaction of one who felt that he was doing his duty, however unpleasant. **At that time.** [Rev. Ver.] "There arose on that day." The murder of Stephen was the beginning of a period of trial to the Church, for the thirst of the mob was but excited by the blood of the first martyr. **They were all scattered.** Not that every disciple was driven away, but the assemblies were broken up, some of the believers were scourged and imprisoned, and many more were driven out of the city. It is not known that any others besides Stephen were put to death. **Regions of Judea.** In the villages of the entire province, as the persecution was at first

only local to the metropolis. **And Samaria.** Now first mentioned in the history of the Christian Church. At first a refuge, it soon became the planting ground of a new Church. Already the traditional enmity between Jew and Samaritan was being overcome by the Gospel. **Except the apostles.** It is a suggestive fact that the twelve remained in the city. Perhaps it was in obedience to their Lord's command; perhaps because the persecution was directed mainly against those who were in sympathy with Stephen's advanced views concerning the Gospel for the Gentiles, which the apostles had not yet fully adopted.

2. Devout men. This is an expression used not of Christians, but of Jews who were faithful to their own religion. They thus showed their admiration for his character, their protest against his tumultuous and illegal murder, and the fact of a secret sympathy with the Gospel, toward which they stood as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea had stood toward Christ. **Carried Stephen,** etc. "Buried Stephen," [Rev. Ver.] Ordinarily one stoned to death was buried without honour, or left dead under a heap of stones. **Made great lamentation.** "A great beating," (literally), as the mourning was accompanied with beating on the breast; not a dignified Christian mourning, with an undertone of peace. 7. Christ's people sorrow not as do others, without hope.

3. Havoc of the Church. "Laid waste." [Rev. Ver.] An expression generally used of wild beasts or hostile armies ravaging and destroying. **Entering into every house.** Rather "from house to house," violating the sanctities of home, not content with breaking up the assemblies of believers. **Haling.** An old word, akin to "hauling;" meaning an arrest by judicial authority, but made with violence. **Women.** Thus, by his treatment of women, showing unusual vehemence and bitterness in his persecution. **Committed them to prison.** Some were scourged in the open synagogue; some were threatened with death, and some were induced to disown Christ. (See Acts 22. 4, 19; 26. 9-11, and other references.) Doubtless to many it seemed to forbode an end of the Church and the ruin of the Gospel, yet it was God's plan for its enlargement.

4. Therefore Because of this persecution, which was thus made to minister to the success of the truth. **Scattered abroad.** Though scattered they still clung to their faith and their testimony. **Went everywhere.** As yet in Palestine and Syria only. **Preaching.** Not in set sermons, but in every form of utterance. **The word.** A term, doubtless in constant use in the early Church, meaning "the word of the Gospel of Christ." 8. All that enemies can do is to extend the sphere of the Gospel. 9. See how God makes even his enemies do his work!

GOLDEN TEXT.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Rev. 2. 10.

OUTLINE.

1. Jesus and Stephen, v. 54-56.
2. Stephen and Saul, v. 57-60.
3. Saul and the Church, v. 1-4.

HOME READINGS.

- M. The first Christian martyr. Acts 7. 54-58. 4.
 Tu. Warning of persecution. John 15. 12-27.
 W. Warning the persecutors. Matt. 23. 27-39.
 Th. Parable of the vineyard. Luke 20. 9-18.
 F. God's messengers slain. Heb. 11. 32-40.
 S. Forgiveness for the persecutor. 1 Tim. 1. 12-20.
 S. Endurance of persecution. Rev. 2. 1-11.

LESSON HYMNS. S. M.

My soul, be on thy guard ;
 Ten thousand foes arise ;
 The hosts of sin are pressing hard
 To draw thee from the skies.

O watch, and fight, and pray ;
 The battle ne'er give o'er ;
 Renew it boldly every day,
 And help divine improve.

Ne'er think the victory won,
 Nor lay thine armour down ;
 The work of faith will not be done,
 Till thou obtain the crown.

No. 746, *New Hymn Book*. 11s.

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
 Looking unto Jesus, who is gone before !
 Christ, the Royal Master, leads against the foe ;
 Forward into battle see his banners go.
 Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
 Looking unto Jesus, who is gone before !

Like a mighty army, moves the Church of God ;
 Brothers, we are treading where the saints have
 trod ;

We are not divided, all one body we,
 One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.
 Onward, Christian soldiers, etc.

No. 746, *New Hymn Book*. 11s.

Crowns and thrones may perish, kingdoms rise
 and wane,
 But the Church of Jesus constant will remain ;
 Gates of hell can never gainst that Church
 prevail ;
 We have Christ's own promise, which can never
 fail.

Onward, Christian soldiers, etc.

Onward, then, ye people, join our happy throng ;
 Blend with ours your voices in the triumph song,
 Glory, praise, and honour, men and angels sing,
 Through the countless ages, unto Christ the
 King.

Onward, Christian soldiers, etc.

Time.—A. D. 37, seven years after the cruci-
 fixation of Christ.

Place.—Jerusalem, and the land of Judea.

Connecting Link.—The address of
 Stephen. Acts 7. 1-53.

Explanations.—*Three things*—The words
 of Stephen in verses 51, 52. *Cut to the heart*—

Made exceedingly angry. *Full of the Holy Ghost*

—What a contrast between the face of Stephen
 and those of his enemies ? *Saw the glory of God*

—The brightness which was the token of God's
 presence. *Jesus standing*—The ascended Saviour,

rising to meet his faithful disciple. *Son of Man*

—A name which was used only by Jesus himself.

Cried out—To show that they regarded his words
 as blasphemous and wicked. *Stopped their ears*—

As if unwilling to hear such words. *Ran upon*

him—Turning from a council into a murderous

mob. *Cast him out*—The Jewish custom required
 that stoning to death should take place outside

of the city. *Stoned him*—Though done by a

mob, it was with all the forms of a Jewish execu-
 tion. *The witnesses*—Those who bore testimony

were required to cast the first stones. *Laid down*

their clothes—Their outer garments, that they

might be free to do the work. *A young man's*

fact—Who took care of them. *Saul*—Afterward

he became the apostle Paul. *Calling upon God*

—This should read, "Calling upon the Lord,"

that is, Christ. *Receive my spirit*—He called

upon Jesus as Jesus while dying had called upon

his Father. Luke 23. 46. *Kneeled down*—To

offer his dying prayer, a prayer for those who

were slaying him. *Lay not this sin*—A forgive-
 ness like that of Christ in Luke 23. 34. *Fell*

asleep—Though murdered, his death was peace-
 ful, like a sleep. *Saul was consenting*—He gave

help and sanction to it. *A great persecution*—

The murder of Stephen led to other acts of

violence. *All scattered*—The Church was broken
 up and disciples driven away. *Except the apostles*

—Who remained in obedience to Christ's com-
 mand. *Devout men*—This means good men who

were Jews, but not Christians. *Great lamenta-*

tion—Sorry for his death, and the way it came
 about. *Havoc of the church*—Laid it waste by

persecution. *Haling men*—Seizing, dragging
 away ; an old word for hauling. *Everywhere*

preaching—So the persecution only spread the
 truth all the more widely.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Jesus and Stephen, v. 54-56. Where
 was Stephen at this time ? How did the council
 feel toward him ? What made them angry at
 him ? v. 51, 52. What did Stephen see ? Where
 was Jesus ? What did Stephen say to the council
 ? What is said of Jesus in Heb. 1. 3 ?

2. Stephen and Saul, v. 57-60. What
 was the effect of Stephen's words on the council ?
 What three things did the council do to Stephen ?
 Who were the witnesses ? Acts 6. 13, 14. What
 young man took part in this murder ? What did
 he do ? See also Acts. 22. 20. What two pray-
 ers did Stephen offer while dying ? Whose dying
 words were these like ? Luke 23. 34, 46. What
 is said of Stephen's end of life ? v. 60.

3. Saul and the Church, v. 1-4. What
 was done with the body of Stephen ? What was
 done to the Church at that time ? What was
 Saul's part in this ? What did he say of it
 afterwards ? 1 Tim. 1. 13. What was the effect of
 this upon the Church ? Was this a harm to the
 Gospel ? How ? How did this illustrate Gen.
 50. 20 ?

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson may we learn—

1. How a Christian should suffer wrong?
2. How a Christian should meet death?
3. How Christ's cause may be helped by persecution?

The Lesson Catechism.—(For the entire school.) 1. What did Stephen see as he looked up to heaven? Jesus on the right hand of God. 2. What did the council do when they heard his words? They stoned him. 3. For what was the last prayer of Stephen? For forgiveness to his enemies. 4. Who took part in the murder of Stephen? A young man named Saul. 5. What did Saul do afterward? He persecuted the Church.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The exaltation of Jesus.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **Jesus and Stephen**, v. 54-56. Why were the council angered at Stephen's sermon. What gave especial power to Stephen in his trial? What especial privilege was granted him? What was his testimony in regard to this? What similar vision did a prophet see?

2. **Stephen and Saul**, v. 57-60. How did the council vent their rage upon Stephen? For what offence did the Mosaic law make this punishment a penalty? Lev. 24. 16. Who were the real blasphemers? What part did Saul take in this service? What words of faith and hope did Stephen utter? In what did he imitate the dying Saviour? To what is his death compared?

3. **Saul and the Church**, v. 1-4. How did Saul regard the death of Stephen? What treatment did the disciples receive? What tribute was paid to Stephen's memory? What part did Saul take in the persecution?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where do we learn—

That heaven may open to the dying Christian?
That dying testimonies may lose their force with sinful men?

That blind zeal may lead men into cruelty and crime?

That the Gospel is spread through the peril and distress of the Church?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

How did Stephen answer his false accusers? Boldly, and without fear. What did he call them? Murderers of Jesus. Did this make them sorry? It made them very angry. What vision did Stephen see? Jesus standing at God's right hand. What did it mean to Stephen? That Christ was ready to welcome him. What happened to Stephen when he spoke of his vision? He was cast out of the city. What sin did the witnesses commit? They stoned him to death. How did Stephen die? He fell asleep, like a little child. What was his last prayer? That his enemies might be forgiven. Who encouraged the murder of Stephen? Saul, of

Tarsus. What was he at this time? An enemy of Jesus. What else did Saul do? He persecuted all who believed in Jesus. What did this lead the disciples to do? To go abroad preaching Jesus. What, then, did Saul's hatred accomplish? It helped to spread the truth. What is waiting for all who love and obey Jesus? Eternal life with him. [Repeat GOLDEN TEXT.]

WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

What true faith gives—Peace of heart in outward storms. Eyes that see Jesus at the right hand of God. A spirit of real love for enemies. A willingness to die rather than deny Jesus.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.**The Martyr and the Persecutor.****I. THE MARTYR SPIRIT.**

1. **Courage.** "Heard these things." v. 54. "Be strong in the Lord." Eph. 6. 10.
2. **Insight.** "Saw the glory of God." v. 55. "Ye shall see heaven open." John 1. 51.
3. **Faith.** "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." v. 59. "A man full of faith." Acts 6. 5.
4. **Forgiveness.** "Lay not this sin to their charge." v. 60. "Pray for them which . . . persecute you." Matt. 5. 44.

II. THE PERSECUTING SPIRIT.

1. **Hatred.** "Gnashed on him." v. 54. "They gaped upon me with their mouths." Psa. 22. 13.
2. **Violence.** "Ran upon him with one accord." v. 57. "Their feet are swift to shed blood." Rom. 3. 15.
3. **Murder.** "They stoned Stephen." v. 59. "Some of you shall they . . . put to death." Luke 21. 16.
4. **Cruelty.** "Haling men and women." v. 3. "Punished them oft in every synagogue." Acts 26. 10.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.**The Dying Saint.**

1. The dying saint's countenance shines with the consciousness of the Spirit's indwelling presence within him.
2. The dying saint enjoys the manifestations of the Spirit, and a special insight into heaven. v. 55.
3. The dying saint enjoys the communion of his spirit with his Saviour, whom he beholds ready to welcome him. v. 55.
4. The dying saint gives a joyous and glorious testimony of his fellowship with God. v. 56.
5. The dying saint looks to Jesus as his Lord, and intrusts his soul to his care. v. 59.

6. The dying saint shows a likeness to Christ in his last utterances, and the spirit of Christ is praying for his enemies. v. 60.

7. The dying saint passes away in peace, and falls asleep in the arms of his Saviour. v. 60.

8. The death of the saint, though mourned by men, is precious in the sight of God. v. 2.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

2. *What is your body?*

My body is this outward frame.

3. *What is your soul?*

My soul is that within me which thinks and knows, wishes and desires, rejoices and is sorry— which my body cannot do.

There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.— Job 32. 8.

Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven.— Job. 35. 10, 11.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

The word "martyr" is so connected in our minds with suffering, and is so often faultily used to designate a mere sufferer, that we are apt to overlook its original meaning, which is simply a "witness." The revisers of the New Testament have helped to keep this in notice, as they have retained the old translation "martyr" in but one of the three passages in which it formerly occurred, namely, in Rev. 17. 6. Stephen is now simply called the "witness," (Acts 22. 20.) and Antipas, "my faithful witness." Rev. 2. 13. The word "martyr," however will always mean, first and chiefest, one who has borne witness for Christ unto suffering and unto death.

And of these Stephen is the first. The apostles had borne noble and powerful witness for Christ before him. But to Stephen it was first given to seal that witness with the sacrifice of his life, and thus to head the long roll of those whose blood has always proved itself "to be the seed of the Church." Yet the difference between his witness and that of any obscure but faithful follower of Christ is one of degree only. And although comparatively few are called to lay down their lives for the Master they serve, all may learn something from the history of this first "martyr."

Let us ask four questions.

1. To what did Stephen bear witness?

(a) *To unseen things.* He testified, like the apostles, of "Jesus of Nazareth," who had been crucified—testified of him as living, and ruling, and working—as the Lord, having power to order his Church, power to forgive, power to save, power to receive the

souls of his servants into glory. This is the witness needed in the world. We all know something of the things round about us here, of worldly work and wages, demand and supply, profit and loss, pain and pleasure. But these things are temporal. It is the unseen things that are eternal. 2. Cor. 4. 18. At death we must part with the things seen. Men, and women, and children want some one who will tell them of the unseen, eternal things.

(b) *To things of which he himself had experience.* Hearsay is of little use when we come to things unseen. The question is, Do I know something of Him whom none can see? Has He revealed himself to my heart? Has He saved me, blessed me? If so, I can witness of Him. But not otherwise. Geographers at home made maps of the interior of Africa as they supposed it to be. But their witness was wrong. And when travellers who had been to see for themselves returned home they told a very different tale. If we would give a true report of Christ, we must know him ourselves.

2. What was the most powerful witness borne by Stephen?

There will be but one answer to this. It was not his eloquent speech, nor his convincing arguments. It was not even the signs and wonders done through his instrumentality. What is it that arrests our attention as we read his story? It is the "angel face" which he opposed to the frowns of his enemies. It is the calmness with which he met their fury. It is the steadfast look up to heaven, which was rewarded with that wondrous sight of the Lord in glory. It is the confident "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." It is the prayer offered up with his latest breath for those who had murdered him. In all this there was no learning, no talent, no skill, no superiority of intellect; nothing that is beyond the reach of the simplest believer. Yet it was a witness that could not and cannot be borne but by the power of the Spirit. Stephen "being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven."

Many who will never be called to actual martyrdom may bear this witness. It will suit the home, the school, the workroom, the crowded street, or the chamber of suffering. No testimony can be borne to any physician so powerful as the healthy appearance and easy movements of the patient he has cured. It is not the handsome casing of a musical instrument, but the sweetness and fullness of its tone, which proves the skill of the maker.

3. How was the witness of Stephen received? With opposition, with contradiction, with anger, with fury, with stopping of

the ears (ver. 57,) with a cruel death. And all this was followed by a hot persecution of other witnesses. Does this look discouraging? It is just what our Lord had foretold. "When the Comforter is come....ye also shall bear witness....they shall put you out of the synagogues," etc. John 15, 26, 27; 16, 1, 2. The world is slow to accept testimony, even on earthly matters. It has calumniated and persecuted those who saw further than their fellows into the mysteries of science, such as Roger Bacon, Galileo, and others. Shall we wonder if it rises up against a testimony to unseen things which brings all its own reckonings to nothing—if Christian meekness, patience, and forgiveness are branded by it as weakness, cowardice, folly? Rather beware of a supposed witness-bearing which calls forth no opposition.

4. What was the fruit of Stephen's witness? First, The dispersion, by persecution, of believers, and the preaching of the word. Second, The career of the great apostle of the Gentiles. Third, The voice which proceeds from that death-scene, sounding out to all ages an echo of the Lord's words, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." If a believer will witness truly and faithfully for Christ, Christ will take care of the fruit. It will come in his own good time. A brave English officer half a century ago refused to pay homage to some idolatrous form of Hindu worship. For this he was dismissed from the service! But his witness bore fruit. The wicked custom that demanded the payment of such homage by our soldiers in India was from that time laid aside. The world needs more martyrs of this sort. And Christ will own them when he shall come "in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

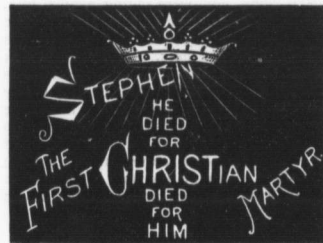
Begin with the picture of the scene: Council with angry faces in a double semicircle, sitting; Stephen standing with face of an angel; Saul in the crowd looking on.... The purpose of Stephen's speech. (See General Statement.).... The facts of the lesson..... The place of Stephen's martyrdom; draw map and show traditional localities.... Show to the class the picture of Damascus Gate in Lesson Commentary.... The method of stoning amongst the Jews.... A second word-picture, the scene at the stoning—Stephen; crowd; witnesses; Saul; above, the opened heavens.... The spirit of Stephen as here shown—what traits?... The Spirit of the slayers.... The spirit of

young Paul: 1. Energy; 2. Leadership; 3. Perverted conscience; 4. Determination.... The third word-picture: the Church after Stephen's death—slaughter, scattering, etc.... What blessings of persecution are here shown?... ILLUSTRATIONS. Instances of martyrs in the Bible—Zechariah. 2 Chron. 24, 20-22; James the apostle. Acts 12.... Instances of persecution—Jezebel, Manasseh, Herod, etc.... In the Tower of London may be seen instruments of torture used in the ages of persecution.... Accounts of martyrs in the Reformation—Ridley, Latimer, Cranmer, etc.... Hymn No. 231, Methodist Hymnal, is the one sung by Jerome of Prague at the stake.... Persecution is the wind which scatters the seed of the word, and gives it space for greater growth.

References. FOSTER'S ILLUSTRATIONS. Vers. 55-60; Poetical, 4018, 4019. Ver. 56: Prose, 1718. Ver. 58: Prose, 4398. Ver. 59: Prose, 10,133, 11,827. Ver. 60: Poetical, 3741; Prose, 1350. Ver. 2: Prose, 7803, 10440. Ver. 4: Prose, 9160.... FREEMAN: Ver. 55: Testimony given standing, 661. Vers. 55, 56: Post of honour, 686. Ver. 58: The outer garments, 205. Ver. 58: Executions outside the gate, 727.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, REG.



Draw the crown with yellow crayon, the name of Stephen in red. The words "he died for" and "died for him" should be of one colour. The letters forming the name of Christ will look best made with white crayon shaded with blue; all the other words and letters should be one colour.

Another blackboard design, and one formerly published in the BANNER, is a cross, and above it a crown. The word "here" is written before the cross, and the word "there" before the crown.

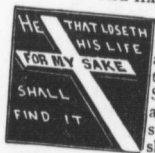
Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. "He that loses his life shall find it."

INTRODUCTORY. Tell that we have a lesson to-day about a man who lost his life for Christ's sake. Recall the trial. Who was the chief of the deacons? Before whom was he brought for trial? What kind of works had been doing? Who was killed before Stephen for doing good works? Tell that Stephen spoke bold, true words to his judges. He told them that they had murdered the Son of God, which makes them very angry. See if children know who these men were. If not, tell that they were the ones who condemned Jesus. Now they persecuted Stephen because he believed in Jesus. Show that it was love of self which made them hate Jesus.

THE HAPPY MARTYR.



Tell what it is to be a martyr, explaining a little about the martyrdoms in the early Church. Recall Stephen's shining face, and ask what made it shine. Show that the shine comes through the globe of a lamp because a light is burning inside, and read from Acts 6, 5, "Stephen, a man full of faith," etc. The Holy Ghost wants to shine in every heart, and will if we let him. Tell where Stephen looked when men were raging against him, and what he saw there. Tell upon whom he called when they were stoning him, and his last prayer—for others, not himself. Ask what this shows, and teach that self-love thinks first of self, and that the only happy people are those whose hearts are large enough to love and bless even those who do them harm. Make vivid word-picture of the scene—Stephen, calm, angelic, happy; the judges with rage and hate in their faces. Where was the rage and hate besides in their faces?

THE UNHAPPY JUDGES.

Talk about the Sanhedrin, and who composed it. They had plenty of money and power, but they had not love. Stephen had no money or worldly power, but he had love. Make a pair of scales on the board, and let children tell which will weigh the heavier, love or power. Talk about happiness and unhappiness, and by questions and examples lead to the thought that only love and truth can be happy. Put lesson thought on board, and let children tell who lost his life, and what he gained. The judges of Stephen saved the life of their bodies, but what did they lose? Show that we try to save life when we seek our own pleasure and way, and that we give up life—the self-life, when we deny self and seek the truth and love.

Ask children if they want self or Christ to be most to them.

LESSON Word-Pictures.

The high-priest was there that memorable day in the Sanhedrin to put the question to the accused, "Are these things so?" Stephen looks up to answer. He sees the seventy judges sitting in a semi-circle, dignified, stern, forbidding. The president is in the middle of this stony arch. Stephen sees also the lying witnesses and the gathered rabble. No friendly face is there, save as some disciple shows himself. He sees the Stephen is far from loneliness. It is the Holy Ghost that fills him, that burns through his words of defence that day. Stephen is looking again as he sends home like hot arrows that charge against the Lord's betrayers and murderers. What a change in that dignified row of judges! They now have the faces of beasts halting before a spring from the doors of their cages! One almost hears the "gnashing" of their teeth. And then to comfort him, O marvellous vision of his faith, that opening heaven, that glory of God, and in the heart of that dazzling glory, at the very right hand of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, not sitting, but standing as if to succour his persecuted servant and to receive him! "Blasphemy! blasphemy!" is the derisive cry we hear welcoming the story of that manifestation. Stopping their ears, the wild beasts madly rush upon him, closing about him on every side. Out of the door of the council-chamber they violently rush him. People in the street are startled to see this tumultuous, swollen stream of wrath sweeping Stephen away as the maelstrom would a twig of the forest. With mad shouts they hurry him through the city gates and then excitedly surround him. There is one minute's pause as Stephen's witnesses tear off their outer garments and lay them "at the feet of a young man named Saul," then picking up the stones with which to make the first assault. Is Stephen's eye in that brief delay sweeping this terrible circle of blood to detect any way of escape? We see him rather looking up in the only direction that is hopeful—toward the blue, pitiful sky, toward his God. The assault begins. His murderers run toward him, hurling those sharp, merciless stones. It is only a hideous catapult—at work on every side, letting fly those missiles of death. Stephen falls, rises, falls—his face still toward the sky as he commends his spirit to Christ. He gets upon his knees once more and his voice is heard for the last time as he breathes out a prayer of forgiveness. His murderers' response is another shower of stones on that scarred, bleeding face, but he heeds them no

more than do dead leaves the rain beating them down. He has fallen asleep in his Lord. His body stirs not beneath the stones piled upon him. His murderers scatter, but people come in groups to look at the dark heaps. Loving hands come also that gently lift the stones and bear the body away to an

honoured burial. Dark days for the Church now! Saul is conspicuous in its persecution, like a whirlwind driving men and women before him into prison. Does not the pleading face of the martyred Stephen sometimes haunt him? Will not the dying prayer for the murderers touch Saul's heart?

First Quarterly Review—March 25.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Lesson I. Acts 1. 1-14.
Tu. Lessons II. III. Acts 2. 1-16; 37-47.
W. Lessons IV. V. Acts 3. 1-11; 12-21.
Th. Lessons VI. VII. Acts 6. 1-14; 18-31.
F. Lesson VIII. Acts 5. 1-11.
S. Lesson IX. Acts 5. 17-32.
S. Lesson X. XI. Acts 6. 1-15; 7. 54-60; 8. 1-4.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—[1. Read over the lessons of the quarter carefully, as they are given in the Home Readings, a part each day. 2. As you read each lesson, see how the questions upon it, given below, are answered. 3. Learn the Title and Golden Text of each lesson. 4. Review all your work on Saturday, and once more on Sunday.]

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Lesson I.—THE ASCENDING LORD.—[Acts 1. 1-14.] How long was Jesus seen after his resurrection? By whom was he seen? What did he promise? Give an account of his ascension? What is the Golden Text? Where does this lesson tell us that we should be witnesses for Jesus?

Lesson II.—THE DESCENDING SPIRIT.—[Acts 2. 1-16.] When did the Spirit descend? Upon whom? Where were the disciples? What was its effect upon them? [Golden Text.] How did they speak? How does this lesson show that we should pray for the Holy Spirit?

Lesson III.—THE BELIEVING PEOPLE.—[Acts 2. 37-47.] Whose address led them to believe? What did Peter tell them to do? How many were added to the Church? How did they show their faithfulness afterward? How does this show that we should receive the word? [Golden Text.]

Lesson IV.—THE HEALING POWER.—[Acts 3. 1-11.] Where was the healing power shown? Upon whom? Whose words caused the healing? What followed the healing? What is the Golden Text? How does this show that we should praise God for his blessings?

Lesson V.—THE PRINCE OF LIFE.—[Acts 3. 12-21.] Who spoke of Jesus by this name? Where and to whom did he speak? What did he say that they had done to Jesus? What did he urge them to do? What is the Golden Text? Where does this lesson teach us that we may have our sins blotted out?

Lesson VI.—NONE OTHER NAME.—[Acts. 4. 1-14.] Who came upon the apostles? What did they do to them? What did they ask them? How did Peter answer them? What did Peter say about the name of Jesus? [Golden Text.] Through whom does this lesson teach us that we should seek to be saved?

Lesson VII.—CHRISTIAN COURAGE.—[Acts 4. 18-31.] Who showed courage? Before whom did they show it? What did they say? What did they do when set free? How was the Spirit's presence shown? Repeat the Golden Text. How may we show our courage?

Lesson VIII.—ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA.—[Acts 5. 1-11.] Who were they? What did they do? What was their crime? How was it discovered? How was it punished? What is the Golden Text? What should we always speak?

Lesson IX.—PERSECUTION RENEWED.—[Acts. 5. 17-32.] By whom was it renewed? What was done to the apostles? How were they set free? What did the officers find? Where and how did they bring the apostles? What did they say? [Golden Text.] Whom does this lesson teach us to obey?

Lesson X.—THE SEVEN CHOSEN.—[Acts 6. 1-15.] Why were they chosen? For what were they chosen? What was their character? [Golden Text.] Who was the greatest among them? What did he do? What was done to him? How did his face look? How does this lesson teach us to be helpful in God's cause?

Lesson XI.—THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR.—[Acts 7. 54-60 and 8. 1-4.] Who was he? What was his vision? What were his prayers? Who helped in his murder? What then came upon the Church? What is the Golden Text? For whom does this lesson teach us to pray?

REVIEW SCHEME FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

I. Repeat the TITLES and GOLDEN TEXTS for the first quarter.

II. State the DOCTRINAL SUGGESTIONS, and show their relation to each lesson.

III. Show in the lessons the RISE and PROGRESS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH among the Jews:

- Lesson 1. Waiting for the Spirit.
- Lesson 2. Receiving the Spirit.
- Lesson 3. Power through the Spirit.
- Lesson 4. Healing by the name.
- Lesson 5. Proclaiming the name.
- Lesson 6. Defending the name.
- Lesson 7. Suffering for the name.
- Lesson 8. Purified from falsehood.
- Lesson 9. Loyalty to duty.
- Lesson 10. Helping the needy.
- Lesson 11. Dying for the truth.

IV. Show how the lessons present the following PRACTICAL DUTIES:

- Lesson 1. Preparation for work.
- Lesson 2. United prayer.

- Lesson 3. Repentance.
 Lesson 4. Helping the helpless.
 Lesson 5. Courageous witnessing.
 Lesson 6. Confessing Christ.
 Lesson 7. Prayer in trouble.
 Lesson 8. Truthfulness.
 Lesson 9. Cleaving to the right.
 Lesson 10. Providing for needy believers.
 Lesson 11. Forgiveness of injuries.

SPECIAL QUARTERLY SERVICE.—Topic: The Family. 1. The divine institution of the family. 2. The importance of religion in the family. 3. The relation of the family to the Church.

REVIEW SCHEME FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

See if you can repeat the GOLDEN TEXTS for the quarter.

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. And when— | 7. If God— |
| 2. And they were— | 8. Lying lips— |
| 3. Then they that— | 9. We ought— |
| 4. Then shall the— | 10. Seven men— |
| 5. In Him— | 11. Be thou— |
| 6. Neither— | |

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

Lesson 1.—Who wrote this book we are studying? Luke. Who was Luke? A physician who believed in Jesus. What promise did Jesus leave to his disciples? To send the Holy Spirit upon them. Where did he bid them wait for it? In Jerusalem.

Lesson 2.—When did God fulfil his promise? On the day of Pentecost. What prophecy of John's was fulfilled? Matt. 3. 2. To what did the Holy Ghost inspire them? To preach to all the people about Jesus.

Lesson 3.—How many believed under Peter's preaching? Three thousand. How did they show their faith? They were baptized in the name of Jesus. How did they worship God. Daily in the temple together.

Lesson 4.—What was the first miracle after Pentecost? The healing of the lame man. How did Peter heal him? By the power of Jesus Christ.

Lesson 5.—What did Peter beg the people to do? To repent, and be converted. What did he promise? That God would blot out their sins.

Lesson 6.—Why did the rulers imprison the apostles? For preaching about Jesus. What were they unwilling to see? The power of Jesus in Peter's works.

Lesson 7.—What did the rulers forbid the disciples to do? Preach about Jesus. Did the apostles obey them? No, they kept on preaching boldly, and without fear.

Lesson 8. Who tried to deceive the apostles? Ananias and Sapphira. How did God punish them? With in-tant death. Rev. 21. 8.

Lesson 9.—How did the rulers try to stop the work of the apostles? By putting them in prison. How did God show his care for them? By sending angels to free them.

Lesson 10.—What good man did great works in Jesus' name? Stephen. What did the rulers and Jews try to do? To make him afraid to speak about Jesus. How did they succeed? He obeyed God rather than men.

Lesson 11.—How did Stephen suffer for Christ? The angry Jews stoned him to death. What should we be willing to give for Jesus? Our lives, if need be.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, HQ.



Draw the arch in white before the school assembles. Question the school in regard to leading facts and truths of each lesson. Let the keystone be for lesson No. 1, "The Ascending Lord," and write the name thereon. Commence with Lesson 2 on the first stone of the arch, and write the first letter of the following principal thoughts or topics of the lessons on each stone:

2. **O**utpouring Spirit.
3. **U**nited Christians.
4. **R**iches of grace.
5. **S**acrificed, saving One.
6. **A** saving name.
7. **V**aliant apostles.
8. **I**niquity punished.
9. **O**bedience a duty.
10. **U**nity in the Church.
11. "**R**eceive my spirit."

Underneath the arch a heart may be drawn, or the names of the three months may be placed.

LESSONS FOR APRIL, 1883.

- APRIL 1. Simon the Sorcerer. Acts 8. 14-25.
 APRIL 8. Philip and the Ethiopian. Acts 8. 26-40.
 APRIL 15. Saul's Conversion. Acts 9. 1-18.
 APRIL 22. Saul Preaching Christ. Acts 9. 19-31.
 APRIL 29. Peter Working Miracles. Acts 9.

Review Service for First Quarter.

BY REV. J. L. HURLBUT.

LEADER. Where are the lessons of the past quarter found?

SCHOOL. In the first eight chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.

LEADER. What is the subject of this book?

SCHOOL. The Acts of the Apostles tells us the early history of the Christian Church, from the ascension of Christ to the imprisonment of Paul in Rome.

LEADER. Who wrote this book?

SCHOOL. The evangelist Luke, the beloved physician and friend of the Apostle Paul.

LEADER. How long a period of time is embraced in the lessons of this quarter?

SCHOOL. Perhaps seven years, from the founding of the Church to the death of its first martyr, Stephen.

LEADER. In what place did most of the events of these lessons take place?

SCHOOL. In the city of Jerusalem.

SINGING. S. M.

I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode,
The Church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.

I love thy Church, O God!
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

LEADER. Let us now repeat the Golden Texts, and notice some of the principal facts of the lessons. The first lesson—The Ascending Lord.

TEACHERS. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up.

SCHOOL. We see the risen Saviour appearing through forty days to his disciples, instructing them in his kingdom and his laws, and finally ascending to his throne in heaven, leaving the promise of his coming. The disciples meet in the upper room, with unceasing prayer for the promised Holy Spirit.

LEADER. The second lesson—The Descending Spirit.

TEACHERS. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

SCHOOL. The day of Pentecost comes, the Spirit of God falls upon the company of disciples, and Peter preaches the first discourse of the new Gospel to the assembled multitude.

LEADER. The third lesson—The Believing People.

TEACHERS. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized.

SCHOOL. Under the word of the Apostle Peter three thousand souls are won, and unite to form the Church of Christ, whose members show love for each other, faithfulness to their Lord, and growth in grace.

LEADER. The fourth lesson—The Healing Power.

TEACHERS. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing.

SCHOOL. Peter and John while entering the temple to worship, meet a lame man at the Beautiful Gate. At the apostle's word he is healed, and leaping and praising God, is seen by all the people, who are thus prepared to hear with eagerness the preaching of the Gospel.

LEADER. The fifth lesson—The Prince of Life.

TEACHERS. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

SCHOOL. Peter preaches in Solomon's Porch to the throng gathered around the healed cripple. He proclaims Jesus, crucified by men, but raised from the dead, as the worker of the miracle and the Saviour of the world, and he exhorts the people to repentance and faith in Christ.

LEADER. The sixth lesson—None Other Name.

TEACHERS. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

SCHOOL. The address of Peter is interrupted by the officers of the temple, who seize the two apostles, and put them under guard for the night. The next day they are brought before the council, and, in the presence of the rulers who crucified Jesus, Peter proclaims him the Christ of God, the King of Israel, and the only Saviour of men.

LEADER. The seventh lesson—Christian Courage.

TEACHERS. If God be for us, who can be against us?

SCHOOL. The rulers forbid the apostles to teach the Gospel of Jesus, or even to speak his name in public. But Peter and John declare that they will obey God rather than men, and the threatenings of the council do not move them. They are set free, and with the Church rejoice in God their helper.

LEADER. The eighth lesson—Ananias and Sapphira.

TEACHERS. Lying lips are abomination to the Lord.

SCHOOL. In the company of believers are a guilty couple who seek to gain honour for generous giving while deceiving the Church of God by withholding a part of their offering. Their crime is revealed by the Holy Spirit through Peter, and they both fall dead as its penalty, bringing warning to the Church and fear upon the world.

LEADER. The ninth lesson—Persecution Renewed.

TEACHERS. We ought to obey God rather than men.

SCHOOL. Once more the apostles are seized and imprisoned. But at night God's angel opens the door and sets them free. They are again brought before the council, again rebuked for preaching Jesus, and again declare that He whom they have crucified is the Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

LEADER. The tenth lesson—The Seven Chosen.

TEACHERS. Seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.

SCHOOL. In the rapid growth of the Church parties are formed and discontent arises over the distribution of gifts to the poor. The gathering storm is averted by the wisdom of the apostles. Seven men are chosen to take charge of the gifts, and one of them, Stephen, soon becomes a leader, with broad views and mighty words. He is seized by enemies, and stands before the council with face glowing from the indwelling presence of the Spirit.

LEADER. The eleventh lesson—The First Christian Martyr.

TEACHERS. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

SCHOOL. Stephen, the earnest preacher, falls as the first martyr, offering prayers for his enemies and commending his spirit to his Saviour. A young man, Saul of Tarsus, holds the garments of Stephen's slayers, and leads in a bitter persecution, dispersing the Church of Jerusalem through all the land; but while scattering the Church, sending the seed of the Gospel all the more widely.

SINGING. 8, 7.

Know, my soul, thy full salvation;
Rise o'er sin, and fear, and care;
Joy to find in every station
Something still to do or bear.
Think what Spirit dwells within thee;
What a Father's smile is thine;
What a Saviour died to win thee;
Child of heaven, shouldst thou repine?

[A class of six scholars come forward.]

LEADER. Let us now listen to some of the promises found in the lessons of the quarter.

FIRST SCHOLAR. This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.

THIRD SCHOLAR. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

FOURTH SCHOLAR. The times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you.

FIFTH SCHOLAR. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

SIXTH SCHOLAR. Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

SINGING. 7s.

Him though highest heaven receives,
Still he loves the earth he leaves;
Though returning to his throne,
Still he calls mankind his own.

Saviour, parted from our sight,
High above your azure height,
Grant our hearts may thither rise,
Following thee beyond the skies.

[A class of eleven scholars come forward.]

LEADER. Let us now see what these lessons teach us by way of encouragement and example.

FIRST SCHOLAR. From the waiting Church in the upper room we learn our privilege of prayer with God for the fulfilment of his promises.

SECOND SCHOLAR. From the descending Spirit on the Day of Pentecost we learn that we may enjoy the Holy Ghost's presence in our hearts, and his power upon our words.

THIRD SCHOLAR. From the believing people we learn our duty to unite with the Church of Christ, and to find our highest joy in the gatherings of his people.

FOURTH SCHOLAR. In the cripple at the Beautiful Gate we see our condition as sinners, and our privilege to be saved from the power of sin and made strong and glad by faith in Christ.

FIFTH SCHOLAR. In Solomon's Porch we learn that we should seek every opportunity to exalt the name of Jesus as the Redeemer from sin, and the hope of the world.

SIXTH SCHOLAR. Peter and John before the council show us that we should be bold in our testimony to Christ, even in presence of his enemies.

SEVENTH SCHOLAR. From the conduct of the apostles when threatened and persecuted, we learn that we should be steadfast in following Christ, and rejoice when we are compelled to suffer in his cause.

EIGHTH SCHOLAR. In the fate of Ananias and Sapphira we see how high is the standard to which Christ's people are held, and we rejoice with trembling as we remember to what faithfulness and sincerity we are called.

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